転生したらスライムだった件 公式ガイドブック 魔王様、リムル様に謁見する!?

熟年冒険者が行く 異世界ガイドブック 下巻

11

なめこ印

イラスト 和狸ナオ

Ore ga Heroine o Tasukesugite Sekai ga Little Mokushiroku!? - Volume 2 - Chapter Prologue

PROLOGUE 1-1 – NOZOMUNO TSUMIKI

——

Within the quiet interior of local eatery “Nozomiya”, Nozomuno Tsumiki let out a huge sigh.

She would never have displayed such a gloomy attitude in front of customers, but that wasn’t the issue now. It had been quite some time since the last customer had left.

sigh…

Tsumiki glanced around the eatery again, void of customers, and her shoulders dropped.

The only energetic creature in the store was the clock’s cuckoo.

There were two reasons why “Nozomiya” was so empty.

First, the eatery was situated along a street which usually saw very few passers-by.

Second, a chain restaurant had opened right in front of the local train station, stealing away the few customers who had frequented “Nozomiya”. The eatery was truly in a desperate situation.

Tsumiki’s parents could only tell their daughter not to worry. She knew that they had said so, not out of adult’s pride, but because they didn’t want her to burden herself with the eatery’s problems.

The eatery, a small establishment managed by their family of three.

Tsumiki loved the eatery.

She couldn't let it close down.

'But what can I do…?'

Tsumiki was well-known in the area as the eatery's cheerful poster girl. There were even a few customers who were her loyal fans, but it was impossible for the eatery to turn a profit based on those people alone.

They could lower the price of items, but her parents would already have done so if they thought it was going to help. But since they didn't, it meant that it wasn't an option she should consider.

The final straw would be taste… She would have to make changes to the menu.

And she didn't mean adding more seasoning to their original items.

She needed to come up with something that would make people come from afar just to get a taste, a famous dish that would capture the customers' hearts.

However, while Tsumiki had much experience in waiting at tables, she had no experience with regards to cooking. That was because her parents had always forbidden her from entering the kitchen.

But Tsumiki was not the type of girl who would back down because she was faced with an obstacle.

"…Yep. Alright, I've decided!"

She would never let her beloved "Nozomiya" close down.

It didn't matter what kind of impossible challenges she would have to face. Taking a deep breath, Tsumiki determinedly made her first move.

PROLOGUE 1-2 – TETRA METRA RETRA

——

Once upon a time, there lived a "monster" who destroyed everything on Earth's surface.

The creature was huge, enveloping the land as far as the eye could see. Its

footsteps created earthquakes, its breath hurricanes, and it enjoyed nothing more than destroying the world.

Finally, its actions stirred the wrath of the gods, who rained divine punishment upon it.

Its humongous frame was forced into a “sealed space” created underground, so that it may never return to Earth’s surface ever again. The gods then built a temple and village next to the “sealed space”, and created people out of clay to guard the doors of the space…

…Now, the descendents of the original guardians were faced with a dangerous situation.

“Ehh, the ‘sealed space’ is experiencing tremors again. Ehh, the walls are slowly collapsing…”

“Is that so? Alright.”

Tetra Metra Retra, the village chief’s daughter, gazed at the statue of the goddess standing in the large room of the temple as she listened to the report of the villager who had just returned from the “sealed space”.

“Thank you for your report. You did a great job.”

Tetra nodded at the villager in gratitude.

Instead of leaving, the man lingered, as if he still had something to say.

“Ehh… That’s that. Will the seal really be broken?”

“……”

A pained expression flitted across Tetra’s face for a moment, but a forced smile soon took its place.

“Things will be alright. When it was first sealed up, the ‘Monster of Haishin’ raged so badly within the ‘sealed space’ that the walls cracked, but it soon grew exhausted and stopped struggling… Well, that was what was written in our folklore. So please, there is no need to worry.”

“Ehh, ehh, that’s good to know, ehh.”

The villager bowed, then left Tetra’s room.

…sigh

After ensuring that she could no longer hear his footsteps, Tetra let out a frustrated sigh.

“How can anyone be assured by a legend that’s millions of years old?”

She whispered at no one in particular, then shook her head a few moments later, as if clearing her mind of something.

Millions of years ago, the gods had granted prosperity to the village in reward for guarding the “sealed space”, including the fact that its people would never go without food, clothing or shelter.

However, that prosperity had sapped the people’s drive to survive and succeed. When one could live in comfort even without working hard, it was natural that people soon turned lazy, no matter how important their mission was.

Right now, the guardians were nothing more than human-shaped blocks of clay lacking all vitality. Even with the village in potential danger, nobody was doing anything. It had gotten so bad that Tetra literally had to order someone to go investigate the “sealed space”.

In fact, Tetra’s assertive actions were described as strange by all the villagers.

But Tetra could do nothing about the “Monster of Haishin” alone.

……No.

In fact, Tetra was the only person in the village who knew how to defeat the “Monster of Haishin”. Using her power as the daughter of the village chief, she had arrived at the answer after gathering all the fragments of legends of the village, then analyzing and studying them.

“……”

However, Tetra had not put her plan into action.

She could not do so.

It was just too cruel.

What could she do?

She couldn’t rely on anybody in the village.

Which meant that she could only seek help from outside.

‘…Why is Tetra working so hard to save the people who aren’t even ready to save themselves?’

A voice at the corner of Tetra’s heart questioned, as doubts of her own weakness surfaced.

But she knew the answer.

Because the village was her beloved home.

Ignoring her weak heart, Tetra made preparations to journey to the Earth’s surface.

——

Note:
Haishin, written as “背信”, means betrayal. However, in the novel, it is written as “背神”, which has the same reading but means “turning one’s back against the gods”. Due to this double entendre, I decided to leave Haishin untranslated in this story.

PROLOGUE 1-3 – ?

——

The “beast” held a strong grudge against the “Monster of Haishin”.

Just how long had it survived with this hatred…? As a non-human entity, the “beast” had been around for a long while, so time held no particular meaning for it.

A long time ago, the “beast” had been tricked by the “Monster of Haishin”.

That mistake had cost the “beast” to lose everything.

Most importantly, it had lost its freedom, and thus, the “beast” had no knowledge of how the “monster” had then gone on to ravage the Earth… However, knowing how much the “monster” enjoyed bringing destruction to all it meets, the “beast” could already guess that the world was doomed.

Hatred and regret, then self-reproach.

“That ‘monster’… I’ll surely… with my own hands…”

Tormented by these three raging emotions, the “beast” lived on, existing in hopes that someday, it would defeat the “Monster of Haishin”. That had become its sole mission.

Without that, the “beast” would have gone crazy.

Without that, it would have lost all will to live.

So, the “beast” waited.

Waited for that one “chance” to regain its freedom.

Waited, without knowing if that time would ever come.

Waited for that day when it would get its revenge and fulfill its mission.

Waited in pain.

Waited with hatred.

And then, one day…

…That “chance” appeared before the “beast”.

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Ore ga Heroine o Tasukesugite Sekai ga Little Mokushiroku!? - Volume 2 - Chapter 1.1

CHAPTER 1 – POSTER GIRL AND DARK MATTER

PART 01

——

It had been five days since the “Namidare Lineage” was awakened within me, and I had saved three “heroines” from three different “stories”.

Since that school opening ceremony day, I had not been dragged into any more new “stories”, and thus would have led a steady, uneventful, ordinary high school life… Or so I thought.

“Rekka-sama, are you feeling a little tired this morning?”

“…Huh?”

I was stumped when Harissa Hope asked me this question before I headed to school.

With her golden curls and cerulean blue eyes, Harissa looked like a foreign girl, but she was in fact a mage from another world. Unable to return to her own world, she was currently staying at my place.

Since her arrival, she had taken on the responsibility of getting the household chores done. Dressed in a rabbit apron today, she had been hard at work all morning. She had on some of my old clothes under the apron, as my mum’s clothes were too big for her. At first, I was afraid she would dislike them because they were guy clothes, but she seemed to really like them.

Oh well, Harissa was just that sort of industrious, hardworking girl. She might be clumsy at times, but it just added to her charm, and I found her really cute.

Now, with her looking up at me through her lashes, all worried, I suddenly thought that this was a situation most guys would love to find themselves in… I quickly glanced away from her.

“Nah, I just didn’t get enough sleep. I’ll be fine after catching a nap at school,” I lied nonchalantly.

“I see. That’s great. Have a good day, Rekka-sama.”

Accepting my excuse at face value, Harissa gave me a bright smile as she bowed.

Waving goodbye to her with a hand drenched in cold sweat, I exited the house.

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I was walking to school alongside Ootomo Satsuki, when she suddenly took a peek at my face.

“Rekka, are you tired?”

“……Huh?”

Stunned by the fact that it was the second time I was being asked the same question, I was late to reply. Awkwardly tilting my head to one side, I sneaked a glance at Satsuki.

She was dressed in our high school uniform, which was a sight I still hadn’t gotten used to, and it made my heart beat a little faster. Since that incident on the first day of school, I’d discovered that she was actually a magician, but our relationship had not changed much since then. It seemed like our bond as childhood friends was still quite intact.

Just then, Satsuki did a little stretch, flipped her long black hair over her shoulder, and looked towards me. I felt like a little boy under the gaze of a watchful, worried big sister.

I knew I should be grateful for her concern…

“Nah, my muscles just feel a little tight. Maybe I exerted myself too much
~~~~~

during physical education yesterday," I fabricated a believable reason on the spot, not looking back at her.

"I see. You can get a cold compress from the school infirmary if the ache doesn't go away."

"Yeah…" I replied, keeping my eyes on the road straight ahead.

~~~~~

"Good morning, Rekka."

"Hey, good morning."

The one who had greeted me so readily when I entered the classroom was none other than the beauty seated next to me, Iris.

Her real name is Iris Pheneritas Psyfacor, and she was an alien. Though she kept it hidden beneath her clothes so that she resembled a human, she actually had a beautiful silver horse-like tail growing from her butt.

Right now, she was dressed in our high school uniform and studying in the same class as me, posing as a transfer student…I'd rather not touch on the actual reason why she was here on Earth.

"Rekka. Why do you look a little tired?"

Iris asked as she tilted her head to one side, her long twin tails following the movement. Then, she moved closer to me.

"……Is that so?"

This was the third time today, and I had no more energy to avert my eyes or lie.

"Yes. Your expression seems to say 'I've had enough'."

"……"

Her words were perfect in describing my current mood, but I kept silent.

Suddenly, Iris leapt up from her chair and into my arms, as if unable to tolerate my surly attitude anymore.

"H-Hey!"

"Seriously! You get to see me so early in the morning, you shouldn't be looking
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so down!”

“Erm, I see you because we’re attending the same school-”

“Rekka, don’t talk back to me!”

Her selfish attitude was just what I expected from a nobleman’s daughter.

And with her embracing me straight on, a part of her was pressed right against my chest… I wouldn’t name it, but it’s the part with two soft mounds! And to do this first thing in the morning was just too attention-grabbing!

“…Rekka! And Iris-san! Please let go of each other this instant!”

Having had enough of the scene, Satsuki scolded as she banged a fist on her desk, glaring with narrowed eyes at Iris. By the way, Satsuki was seated on my other side. Trapped between these two girls, the trouble never stopped coming.

“What’s wrong!? You’re being so noisy. I’m just worried about Rekka’s health!”

“That does not seem to be the case.”

“Don’t be so grouchy. You’ll never grow big boobs that way, no matter how much milk you drink.”

“Well, it seems like your brain hasn’t grown as well as your boobs, Iris-san.”

These two were not just casually flinging insults at each other. They were hurling them with all their mights.

“…I think it’s about time we had a thorough discussion about that, don’t you think?” Iris taunted with a cold, confident smile.

“Of course. There are some things which I’d love to discuss with you, Iris-san,” Satsuki replied with a smile that made shivers run down my back.

Their gazes locked over me, still trapped in the middle, and sparks seemed to fly. Please do this somewhere else, I don’t want to catch on fire.

“Then let’s go outside for awhile,” Iris said.

“Alright. We’ll decide the victor when one of us is no longer able to stand up,” Satsuki declared.

“Hey, wait, both of you!”

Yes, I said I wanted them to move away, but this really called for a mediation. What they were implying just seemed too dangerous. What did Satsuki mean by one of them no longer being able to stand up!?

Don’t we normally aim to resolve discussions as peacefully as possible!?

And so, another mentally-draining day begins.

Ore ga Heroine o Tasukesugite Sekai ga Little Mokushiroku!? - Volume 2 - Chapter 1.2

CHAPTER 1 – POSTER GIRL AND DARK MATTER

PART 02

——

Yes, I knew the reason.

The reason why I was always exhausted, no matter how much I slept…and the reason was, "…IT'S ALL YOU GIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIRLS!!"

I screamed to the hills at the back of the school as I stood on the rooftop.

"—IIIIIIRLS" echoed back at me as I fought to regain my breath.

"What are you doing, Rekka-san? People are going to think you're a weirdo," R, a young girl dressed in a military uniform, quipped calmly as she floated in midair.

Appearance-wise, R resembled a young girl, but she is actually an artificial lifeform from the future, sent here to monitor my actions. She usually has a stoic look on her face, but her words can really sting.

"Don't call me a weirdo. Getting pulled around by Satsuki and Iris and Harissa every single minute of every day just makes me want to scream!"

"Say that to another guy, and he'll be so jealous that he'll want to dismember you."

"I don't care!" I yelled as I grabbed at my head with both hands.

"Then just pick one of the 'heroines'," R sighed.

The reason why she'd come all this way from the future was to prevent an event known as the "All Of War", instigated by all the "heroines" I would rescue

in the future. It seemed like the only way to avoid the war was for me to choose one of the “heroines”.

It might sound like I was trying to wriggle my way out of the situation, but…

“It’s not as easy as you make it sound.”

“Oh dear, so Rekka-san prefers polygamy?”

“No, dumbass!”

Turning back to the fence surrounding the rooftop, I screamed my frustrations out to the hills again. But even that was not enough to dissipate my anger, and I ended up rolling around on the rooftop in a childish tantrum.

This was really the limit for me.

This life of a “Namidare”.

This constitution, caused by my “Lineage”, that drags me into endless “stories”.

No thanks to the awakening of this constitution on my sixteenth birthday, I’d had to fight the world’s strongest wizard, defeat an otherwordly Demon King, challenge the dictator of a galaxial superpower… Arghh, just recalling all these troublesome incidents just swamped me with melancholy.

However, I’d managed to overcome it all successfully, and I should have returned to my beloved, ordinary life… But that illusion was shattered the very next day after I returned from the adventures.

For example, Satsuki and Harissa would constantly fight over who should be the one to prepare my boxed lunch.

Another example, Satsuki and Iris would also quarrel over who should be the one to pair up with me during physical education classes.

Yet another example, I would need to ask permission from the other two girls if I was going to sit next to Harissa on the sofa when we were watching TV.

“Those fights over boxed lunches are the worst…”

“Because it seems like Satsuki-san and Harissa-san may go to war any minute?”

“Yeah…”

At first, Satsuki had wanted to ensure that I wouldn’t do anything strange with Harissa, so she decided to come to my house every morning to prepare breakfast and our boxed lunches. However, Harissa, who had taken it upon herself to complete the household chores, declared that she wanted to make boxed lunches for me too, and the rest was history.

It didn’t help that both Satsuki and Harissa refused to back down…

I feared that they might end up having a battle with magic someday.

But the most dangerous part was when I needed to make a decision on whose boxed lunch I preferred…

In the end, we decided that the girls would take turns. If Harissa was preparing breakfast, then Satsuki would take charge of the boxed lunches, and vice versa… They would switch on alternate days, and thankfully, both were satisfied with this arrangement.

Though the entire process almost made me burst with frustration.

And that was how the past five days had been like.

“How are you finding this interesting harem life so far?”

“The only thing I’ve found out is how physically and mentally draining this whole thing is…”

I sighed as I leaned against the fence. R still seemed so carefree despite all my grumbling.

I’d lost much sleep and energy these few days, no thanks to those girls dragging me into everything.

If I didn’t catch a break soon, I might just die of exhaustion.

Damn, to think I’d inherited such a troublesome “Lineage”.

“I think I’ll die if I’m dragged into any more ‘stories’,” I muttered tiredly, gazing up at the clear blue sky.

“Don’t jinx yourself,” the being from the future replied.

…Why did she always have to be so blunt?

Oh. A cloud had moved to cover the sun.

——

Note:

The last sentence of this part may seem random, but it is linked to what R had said.

The Japanese proverb for “don’t jinx yourself” is 噂をすれば影 (uwasa wo sureba kage), which literally means “speak a rumor and shadow will come”, so the cloud passing over the sun and shadowing it gives a foreshadowing to Rekka being dragged into more stories later on in the book.

Ore ga Heroine o Tasukesugite Sekai ga Little Mokushiroku!? - Volume 2 - Chapter 1.3

CHAPTER 1 – POSTER GIRL AND DARK MATTER

PART 03

——

Lunch break was coming to an end, and I slowly made my way to the stairwell leading down from the rooftop.

R was floating around me in circles, body hunched so that she looked like a tiny boomerang, chanting, “I’m~so~dizzy~”. Her actions contrasted starkly with my misery, but it couldn’t be helped since she couldn’t physically be more than five metres away from me.

Ignoring R, I jogged down the corridor. I’d escaped to the rooftop of the special rooms block to vent my frustrations out of sight, and if I didn’t hurry back, I’d be late for my next lesson.

“Hey hey hey hey wait wait, you over there!”

Just then, a voice, speaking excessively fast, shouted from behind me, halting my progress.

Turning around, I found a fork stabbed into my face by a girl in a slightly worn-looking uniform.

“W-what?”

Our school ties were the same color, which meant that she was a freshman just like me, but her overbearing attitude immediately sounded alarm bells in my head.

“Have you eaten?”

“Huh…?”

Stunned by the unexpected question, I could only come up with a dumb reply.

The girl, with shoulder-length hair tied in a small ponytail on her right side, tapped her foot impatiently.

“I asked, have you had your lunch yet?” She asked again, clarifying herself.

“…Not yet.”

In fact, I hadn’t had lunch, since I took the first chance I got to escape from the classroom to destress. If I didn’t, Satsuki and Iris would have grabbed one of my arms each and forced me to make the gutwrenching decision of who I wanted to eat lunch with that day.

“So you haven’t eaten lunch? You’re not lying, are you?”

“I’m telling the truth… Anyway, isn’t this a weird question to ask someone at the end of lunch break?”

I knew I hadn’t eaten that day, but normally, most students, myself included, would have finished lunch by this time.

So what were the odds that this girl would have asked me this particular question today…?

“Then please eat this.”

With that, the girl stabbed at “something” on the plate she was holding in one hand with the fork.

…Erm, well… What was “this”, actually?

It was black.

But not the natural black of sesame seeds or seaweed.

To be honest, the color resembled something you’d get from mixing all the shades together on a paint palette, then combining it with the clumpiness of potato starch mixed with sulfuric acid… I didn’t know where that description came from, but it seemed to prefectly describe the blackness of the substance on her plate.

And now, that weird black blob was being pushed into my face.

My survival instinct kicked me in the ass, as if telling me to “Run! Run or you’ll die!”

“S-Sorry, but I’m not hungry. Bye!”

With that short excuse, I turned to escape, but she dashed to stand in front of me again.

“All the more you should try this. I’ve added dried plum, lemon, grapefruit, broadbean chilli paste, salty miso and balsamic vinegar to this dish specifically to boost appetite.”

“That’s too weird! That’s just too weird!”

“Sour foods make you salivate more, so you feel hungry. Spicy foods too, so I’ve added everyone’s favorite curry rice in as well.”

“You added too much stuff! And which part of that black blob even resembles curry rice!?”

“Well, I mixed it all together, then grilled, steamed, and chilled it, before adding my secret ingredient.”

But aside from hotpots and salads, don’t all other foods taste bad when mixed all together!? And that secret ingredient did not sound good. For all I knew, she’d added mud into the dish!

My survival instinct kicked me in the ass again.

“……!!”

I quickly turned around again, ready to dash out of this place without a shred of shame…but the girl tripped me up in an instant. The moment I crashed onto the floor, she climbed on top of me. I can’t escape!?

“Come, be a good boy and eat it.”

“Wait wait wait! I actually don’t like spicy food!”

“Oh. It’s alright, since I added chocolate and mont blanc in as well.”

“More weird ingredients!? O-Oh! You added curry with beef, right? My religion

forbids me from consuming beef!”

“What’s your religion?”

“Erm…”

What was that religion that forbids the consumption of beef?

“I knew you were lying. Seriously, why does everyone lie?”

“…Everyone?”

“Whenever I ask someone to try this, they all lie and escape. How rude. I actually spent all night cooking up this new item to add to ‘Nozomiya”s menu, so everyone should be grateful and try it.”

“…Just curious, where are all the prople who lied to you?”

“They’re all sleeping in the school infirmary.”

“GYAAAAAAAAAHHHH!”

That was just too crazy!

Just then, another female student appeared further along the corridor of the special rooms block.

“Tsumiki! What are you doing?”

“Tsk!”

The girl, Tsumiki, clucked her tongue in annoyance, before prying my mouth open forcefully.

“I’m not going to let you stop me again! And you better eat up too… Eat it!”

“GYAAA-pu!?”

The moment that black blob was shoved into my mouth, a taste I’d never experienced before spread across my tongue… Then, memories of that time when I went on a picnic with the old man and mum, and when I played with Satsuki in the park as a child, suddenly flashed through my mind.

“That’s your life flashing before your eyes. I’m outta here.”

With that, my survival instinct bid me goodbye as my vision went black.

Ore ga Heroine o Tasukesugite Sekai ga Little Mokushiroku!? - Volume 2 - Chapter 1.4

CHAPTER 1 – POSTER GIRL AND DARK MATTER

PART 04

——

“Ugrurf!?”

A nightmare, where the whole world was overrun by black blobby bugs. Just as I was about to be crushed under the wave of insects…

I opened my eyes, and found myself in the school infirmary. The blanket which I’d tossed off of my body in a panic drifted back down over me, and I turned my head into the sweat-soaked pillow.

“Rekka? Thank goodness you’re awake.”

The curtains around my bed parted, and Satsuki entered.

The wet towel she was holding in her hands fell to the floor as her eyes filled with tears.

“Thank goodness… I was so worried that you won’t ever wake up again.”

“…Huh? Was I in such a bad state?”

I remembered being forced to eat the black blob by that Tsumiki girl… No, I couldn’t recall what happened after that.

Satsuki patted me gently on the forehead and chest, a worried expression on her face.

“What exactly happened? Why were you made to eat some cursed poison potent enough to kill hundreds of sacrifice victims…?”

“Cursed…poison?”

I knew the food was bad when I heard that girl talk about the ingredients and preparation method, but to hear Satsuki describe it with those words just made it seem a lot worse.

“Fortunately, the dish wasn’t imbued with magic, so I managed to break the curse, but it was really dangerous,” Satsuki explained with a serious expression on her face.

I could only give a crooked smile in reply.

To think that a weird dish could leave a magician like Satsuki shuddering in fear… Did that girl possess some sort of talent afterall?

Satsuki informed me that she had treated all the other victims who were forced to consume that girl, Tsumiki’s, concoction as well. Since I was the only one unfortunate enough to swallow an entire mouthful of the black blob, the rest had recovered some time ago and returned to classes.

“By the way, where’s Iris?”

Just then, I noticed the absence of the usually boisterous nobleman’s daughter.

“Erm… Well, Iris-san is…”

According to Satsuki, when her magic had failed to revive me immediately, Iris had declared that she would go fetch the most advanced medical equipment in the universe to help. And so, she had dashed out of school, or rather, out of Earth.

“So Iris is on her way to Phenerita now?”

“Probably… I know I should have stopped her, but I was in a real panic then too… So I didn’t manage to hold her back,” Satsuki added in a guilty tone.

She was probably regretting the fact that she had lost her cool.

“Nah, it’s alright. Thanks for worrying so much about me.”

“Y-You’re welcome.”

Why was Satsuki blushing and looking away?

Anyway, if Iris was really in outer space now, it meant that we had no way to contact her. If not, I could call her right now and ask her to come back.

Just then, the door to the infirmary opened, and someone entered the room.

“Oh, you’re awake. Thank goodness.”

It was the girl who had tried to stop Tsumiki.

Tsumiki’s friend, who shortly introduced herself as Satou-san, apologized to me before explaining the whole situation.

“Food Champion?”

“Yes. It’s a festival held annually in a neighboring town, and thanks to the recent popularity of DIY gourmet, this year’s event will be broadcast on TV to the entire country,” Satou-san patiently explained to a clueless me.

“I see. So she wishes to win the competition and makeover her family’s eatery.”

“Yes…”

“And she is creating new dishes and forcing everyone to give it a try?”

And her creation was definitely that black blob… Honestly, I felt that the chance of her winning was smaller than a speck of dust. She’d probably win a pair of silver handcuffs rather than a champion trophy.

“Erm, isn’t her dad the head chef of ‘Nozomiya’? Why doesn’t she just get him to join Food Champion?”

I felt that it was a great solution, but Satou-san shook her head.

“I don’t want to speak badly of Tsumiki’s father…but ‘Nozomiya”s menu items are really nothing special. I don’t think he’s able to create anything that will draw the attention of the judges at the competition.”

I see. So it wasn’t enough to join the competition, they had to win it too.

“In that case, why doesn’t she learn cooking from someone?”

Satsuki, who had been listening in as well, provided this sound suggestion.

While that might not help Tsumiki to win the competition, at least she’d have a

better chance after some lessons than how she was right now.

However, Satou-san still looked perplexed.

“Tsumiki’s the type to dash on blindly once she’s made up her mind. I don’t think she’d listen to anyone’s advice…”

“Well…”

“What a troublesome personality…”

Satsuki and I whispered amongst ourselves. Satou-san apologized again.

Wait. Food Champion, an eatery that was in danger of going out of business.

Was this…?

“Hey, R.”

Stealing glances to ensure that Satou-san, whose head was bowed in apology, and Satsuki, who looked deep in thought, were not looking at me, I whispered in the ear of the girl floating beside me.

“Hey, that tickles.”

“If you were trying to be flirtatious, it didn’t work. Anyway, is Tsumiki a ‘heroine’?”

“Yes, that’s right.”

I knew it.

Argh, guess I have no choice then.

Even though I’m just an ordinary guy who hates complicated things.

I’m not that sort of cold-blooded man who would ignore a girl and let her story come to an “end”.

I’m just that unfortunate…but that’s ordinary, right?

“Alright, I get it. I’ll do something.”

“Huh?”

The two girls gasped in shock at my sudden announcement.

Ore ga Heroine o Tasukesugite Sekai ga Little Mokushiroku!? - Volume 2 - Chapter 1.5

CHAPTER 1 – POSTER GIRL AND DARK MATTER

PART 05

——

After finding out which class Tsumiki was in from Satou-san, I dashed down the corridor to her classroom.

Sixth period had just ended when I exited the infirmary, so I had a short interval of time before homeroom period began. I had to find Tsumiki and speak to her before then.

“Rekka, how do you intend to convince Nozomuno-san?”

Satsuki, who was right behind me, asked.

After hearing about Tsumiki’s personality from Satou-san, I didn’t think she would be a person who would be easily convinced…

“I’m hoping that you’d help me out with that, Satsuki.”

Turning around, I looked into the face of my childhood friend the magician.

“Me?”

“Yes, basically…”

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It turned out that Tsumiki’s classroom was just three doors down from ours.

Normally, I would have knocked on the door before entering, but I didn’t want to bring too much attention to us. As it was break time, everyone was milling in and out of the classrooms, and since we’d just started out at this school a few
~~~~~

days ago, I was sure that no one would notice I wasn't from that class if I walked in like I belonged.

Entering the room, I spotted my target and headed straight towards her.

Noticing my approach, Tsumiki raised an eyebrow.

"……Hm? Who are you?"

Apparently she totally didn't remember that she almost poisoned me to death just a moment ago.

Well, since I struggled on the brink of life and death for nearly an hour, I guess it technically wasn't a moment ago… But she was the one who force-fed me her cooking, how could she forget the fact that I'd fainted right before her eyes? … But whatever.

Steeling myself, I answered Tsumiki.

"Erm, I'm Namidare Rekka. I heard that, well…your family's eatery is facing some trouble, and was wondering if I could be of any help…"

"…Who did you hear that from?"

"From Satou-san."

"Oh, Sato-chan… Anyway, it's none of your business, so get lost."

Grr, how unapproachable.

"B-But listen to me."

"Shut up. Leave me alone! I'm busy thinking up new recipes."

You mean you're busy inventing new poison?

No no, this wasn't the time to think like that. The fate of this girl lay in my hands.

"Tsumiki, do you still have any of that black bl-… I mean, your culinary creation left?"

"Why are you talking to me like we're friends? You're being over-friendly… I still have some, why?"

There, I knew it.

“Let me eat it.”

“Huh?”

Tsumiki, who had appeared totally disinterested and hadn’t even spared me a glance, suddenly turned towards me with a startled expression.

“Even if you think up new recipes, you still need someone to try them out, right?”

“…Well, that’s not a problem.”

“Liar. You had to force me to eat it just now.”

“…Where did you see that?”

“I didn’t see it. I was the one whom you force-fed,” I retorted spitefully.

No, I needed to forget that. I continued on, “Isn’t it laborious to dash around everyday, forcing people to eat stuff? Don’t you have better things to do?”

“…You’re not wrong.”

Tsumiki seemed to consider something, before pulling out a tupperware container from her bag.

She then opened the lid to reveal the black blob.

“Urgh…!”

“If you’re going to pass out every time you eat, then it’ll still be as laborious, right? I’ll warn you first; all my cooking ends up looking like this.”

“…So you pretty much know that it sucks?”

“Shut up. You’ll make Sato-chan really angry. So, you eating it or not?”

Why was she so awful…? Whatever. Now I just needed to eat that black blob…I think it was entirely appropriate to call it Dark Matter, and not faint from it.

“Alright, give it to me.”

Picking up a piece of Dark Matter with the fork, I brought it to my mouth.

“……!”

I saw Tsumiki take a deep breath from the corner of my eye.

chew

“NNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNMMMMMMMFFFFFFFF!!”

It was a magical taste that was bitter and spicy and salty and spectacularly slightly sweet and creamy and bursting just a little and bursting a whole lot and making the back of my teeth chatter.

I lost track of rational thought.

Forcing back my tears with all my might, I stole a glance at Satsuki, who was standing beside me.

A single trail of sweat tracked its way down her cheek, but she gave me a nod.

Basically…I’d gotten Satsuki to place an anti-curse spell on me beforehand, and it seemed to be working. I’d asked for a spell that would resuscitate me immediately once I fainted, but Satsuki thought of using a type of defense magic instead.

Thanks to her, I managed not to faint.

The intense taste of the dish exploded within my mouth like a bomb, but with the protection of the anti-curse spell, the damage (?) had been reduced.

“Nnggh……! *cough*……! ……..!”

…It had been reduced, right?

I wasn’t sure what would happen if I spoke honestly…but it really tasted totally disgusting.

If she presented this at Food Champion, it could very well be considered a destructive weapon, and defense troops would surely be mobilized.

But if she didn’t enter the competition, “Nozomiya” would close down, and her “story” would have a bad ending.

I needed to stop that from happening…!

So I couldn’t be defeated by awful-tasting food now!

……*swallow!*

Having finished it all, I panted as I crashed headfirst on to Tsumiki’s desk.

“S-See…!? I didn’t faint…!!”

I was feeling a little light-headed, but I’d managed to pull through. Looks like Satsuki’s anti-curse spell had worked.

Tsumiki’s eyes widened, but her expression remained uncaring.

“…Humph, fine. I’ll let you be my taste tester for the time being.”

Looking down, she extended a hand to me.

“So? What’s your name?”

“I remember introducing myself just now… Anyway, I’m Namidare Rekka, please-!?”

Just as I was about to shake her hand, she suddenly aimed a punch at my head. Losing my balance, I landed on my ass on the floor. Ouch…

“I’m Nozomuno Tsumiki. I’m warning you, you’re only a taste tester. Don’t think that you can go around boasting that you’d managed to get closer to me, or become my friend.”

“…I’ll keep that in mind,” I answered as I nodded weakly.

“Things look grim for you.”

R commented nonchalantly as she floated upside-down in midair, looking down at my dejected form sitting head hung on the floor.

Ore ga Heroine o Tasukesugite Sekai ga Little Mokushiroku!? - Volume 2 - Chapter 1.6

CHAPTER 1 – POSTER GIRL AND DARK MATTER

PART 06

——

After school, I hurriedly made my way over to the “Nozomiya” to taste…or rather, be poisoned by, Tsumiki’s cooking.

But having waited in vain at “Nozomiya”‘s main counter with no one in sight, I sent R on a mission to peek into the kitchen.

“Rekka-san, please don’t die here, ok?” she commented before floating away.

I didn’t know it I should be worried or irritated by her comment.

A terrible anxiety gnawed at me as I rested an elbow on one of the tabletops and let out a sigh.

The only people in “Nozomiya” at the moment seemed to be only R, Tsumiki and myself. I’d heard from Tsumiki that her parents were out on an errand in town, and wouldn’t be back till late.

I’d actually considered asking Satsuki to come along, but she’d gone off to the hills at the back of the school in search of magical herbs before I could ask her.

“I’ll make some simple medicines to protect your stomach, Rekka, as well as some anti-curse and poison antidotes,” she’d said before she left.

Satsuki’s concern was a real comfort to me.

Jokes aside, I was sure that the only thing stopping death from conquering me were her spells.

I hoped that she would hurry back with them.

Just then, Tsumiki, dressed in a short-sleeved top with her hair wrapped in a triangular head scarf, came out of the kitchen.

“It’s done.”

Alright, here we go…

This was it, my first assignment as a taste tester…I had only a brief moment to steel myself before it began.

“Nnrgh!?”

For the nth time that day, an “Armageddon” exploded inside my mouth as I toppled from the chair and spasmed on the floor.

Glaring down at me with a sullen expression on her face, Tsumiki tapped on my shoulder with her ladle and asked in a casual tone,

“So? How does it taste?”

“Extremely bad!”

I yelled as a pounding headache set in, but that pain was nothing compared to the torture happening in my mouth.

“That’s because you don’t cultivate good habits.”

“Why do I feel like I’m in Hell, being judged by a demon!?”

After downing countless cups of water to cool my body, Tsumiki finally led me into the kitchen to her preparation table. Shouldn’t she have done this before making me eat her creation?

I would forever remember what happened next…

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“Whoa! Why on earth are you mixing those ingredients together!?”

“I’m creating a new sauce.”

“But you’ve already added in more than ten ingredients! The bowl’s so full that it’s overflowing!”

“Shut up, just lick the spoon and try it.”

“Mmph…! …Bleargh!?”
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“Wait. What is this collection of weeds? Some of them still have mud on the roots.”

“Weeds are just undiscovered herbs, some of which may just be edible. Let’s put them all into the blender.”

“GYAAH! Why did you add in fermented mackerel!?”

“Weeds and fermented mackerel have similar-sounding names*, so they probably will taste good together. Let’s blend!”

“But fermented mackerel isn’t a plant! And this really stinks…did you clean the mud off those weeds?”

“But they say that mud on vegetables is a sign of freshness.”

“That’s what grocers say when they sell it to you. You have to clean them after you buy them!”

“Oh, that’s right. I’ll add in some gelatin here so it’ll thicken up into a jelly. Jellies are usually sweet, so let’s add some sweetness too. Do you prefer chocolate or candy?”

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“So…why is it that everything you cook turns out to be Dark Matter?”

“Who knows?”

“That’s because you keep adding weird things! Don’t you know!? If you mix all the colors on your paint palette, you’ll end up with black! This is the same! Please, let’s try to make something more ordinary!?”

“But an ordinary dish isn’t going to win Food Champion! We need something that’s impactful!”

“We’re not celebrities auditioning for some movie! Don’t you think there’s something more important than impact?!”

“…A theme song?”

“This isn’t a pro-wrestling competition—!”

~~~~~~

…Rather than a cooking session, this was turning out to be more like a comedy show.

Without even the most basic knowledge and doubt of her own skill, Tsumiki's cooking was truly so novel and extraordinary, it almost seemed like food from another dimension.

"Arghh~ seriously! You've been talking too much! I should have done this myself!"

Tsumiki muttered furiously.

"……"

I had no more energy to argue with her as I leaned back heavily against my chair, mind blank.

An awkward silence descended upon the kitchen.

"…I'm throwing this away outside."

With that, Tsumiki picked up a huge plate piled with black blobs and headed out the service door.

……*sigh*

Letting out a gusty sigh, I clutched at my head with my hands.

Food Champion was scheduled to take place a week from now, which meant that I needed to find the light that would guide this "story" to a happy ending before that happened.

However, I was a person who couldn't even get my own household chores done. It would be impossible for me to create pro-level cuisine. Even Satsuki, Iris and Harissa would be of no help, and R would never help me with a story's "resolution" as well.

"……"

Taking a few deep breaths to calm down, I combed my fingers through my hair to neaten it up again.

Tsumiki had always been the poster girl of "Nozomiya", so she'd never done
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any cooking before. Though with those skills, her parents would probably forbid her from entering the kitchen anyway.

Of all the people I knew, the ones who could really cook were my old man and Satsuki… Well, I was sure I could get Satsuki to help out, but it would be almost impossible for her cooking to win the Food Champion.

Then again, I thought that getting Tsumiki to learn from Satsuki was the best choice we had.

However, when I voiced that suggestion to Tsumiki earlier on,

"You're really such an idiot! You talk as if this place is famous for some delicacy, like how Utsunomiya is famous for gyoza and Sanuki is famous for udon, and 'Nozomiya' is a famous eatery with a long tradition in making such delicacies and I just had to learn how to. But no! This city is not famous for any cuisine! And 'Nozomiya' is just a plain old family eatery! So doing what we've always done is not going to help us win! That's why I need to create a new delicacy that nobody has ever seen before!"

She'd shouted as she hurled a pineapple directly into my face. That really hurt. No thanks to her, my face was now covered in bandaids.

…But Tsumiki's logic made sense.

For "Nozomiya", a ordinary eatery with no trademark delicacy, to win Food Champion, we needed to aim for a homerun.

That was why Tsumiki had foregone all theory and jumped straight into those extraordinary cooking methods. There was really no other choice.

"If only there was a real opponent, like an evil Demon King or wizard, to defeat… This is as impossible as those other opponents. Shit!"

This situation was truly a burden as heavy as the others.

If I didn't do something soon, Tsumiki and "Nozomiya" would both head towards a bad ending. I had to stop that from happening, no matter what.

"…Cooking, huh?"

Anyway, winning Food Champion was only the first step, we still needed to get the customers to frequent "Nozomiya" once again.

Maybe I could employ some underhanded trick, like getting one of the girls to cast some magic and decceive the palates of the Food Champion judges to secure victory. But if the customers returned to find that the winning new delicacy wasn't delicious, they would still leave eventually.

"So, will Rekka-san successfully resolve this 'story'?"

R teased as she floated on her back, languidly kicking her legs and propelling herself through the air.

"Arghh, this is really tough."

"Oh dear, don't chicken out now."

"But don't they always say that it takes years to master cooking? I was just thinking…if we can't win with skill, maybe we can search for a totally new ingredient that nobody has ever tasted before… That may be our only way to win this."

Though there was a higher chance that we would find some random weird ingredient instead.

If Iris was here, maybe I could have asked her to gather some new ingredients only available on other planets. But she was not here right now, and I had no way of contacting her.

"By the way, Tsumiki's been gone for a long while, don't you think?"

"Now that you mention it…"

R and I turned towards the kitchen's service entrance.

Since she'd headed outside with the plate, she must have gone to the dump near the back of the eatery. I was sure she couldn't have wandered any further while carrying all that Dark Matter.

But she had been gone for more than ten minutes.

Maybe she was getting something done outside…but I was still vaguely worried.

"Shall we go look for her?"

"Alright."

I stood up from my seat and headed out the service entrance, with R swimming along beside me.

——

Note:
Tsumiki mentioned that “weeds and fermented mackerel have similar-sounding names”. Wild grass in Japanese is “kusa”, while the common name for fermented mackerel is “kusaya”. Find out more about Kusaya here:https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kusaya

Ore ga Heroine o Tasukesugite Sekai ga Little Mokushiroku!? - Volume 2 - Chapter 1.7

CHAPTER 1 – POSTER GIRL AND DARK MATTER

PART 07

——

We'd spent more time in the kitchen taste testing than I'd thought. The sun had already set by the time I stepped outside.

"Hmm?"

I spotted Tsumiki almost right away.

She was crouching in a corner of the garden at the back of the eatery, fiddling with something.

"……?"

Finding her behavior suspicious, I made my way over.

"What are you doing?"

"Hyaaah!? H-Hey, don't creep up on me like that!"

Tsumiki seemed overly shocked as the shovel she was holding fell from her hands. Wait, a shovel?

"Are you trying to bury the Dark Matter underground? You know you're going to end up polluting the soil in this area and it'll become a piece of barren land for centur-… Huh?"

Just then, I caught a glimpse of the soil beneath Tsumiki's hands and spotted a mysterious "hole".

A shovel and a hole. I shouldn't be surprised. But that "hole" was really

strange.

Firstly, I couldn't see to the bottom of it. It was no bigger in diameter than a dinner plate, so she'd have to dig really deep for the bottom of the hole to not be visible. Yet Tsumiki's clothes were clean, a testament that she had not done any serious digging.

Furthermore, the fact that the entire hole was completely black was strange too. No matter how deep the hole was, the area which was nearest to the surface should still be faintly visible.

To top it all off, a weird black aura was emitting from the sides of the hole, trailing up into the air like tentacles.

In conclusion, it was not an ordinary hole.

"Wh-what's with that hole?"

"What do you mean, what? It's a hole where I dump rubbish."

"No no no, that wasn't what I'm asking! That looks just like a black hole, or the entrance to the underworld!?"

"Huh? Are you crazy?"

Damn! I did sound slightly unhinged, but…

"So what's with that hole!?"

"I found it by accident when I was just a kid. I used to try filling it in with soil, but it never worked, so I usually place a lid on it and cover that with soil to hide it from view."

"Why would you want to hide it?"

"I told you, right? This hole can never be filled, so it's really convenient. Besides, it's so small, so there's no danger of me falling in."

…I see. So she was dumping the Dark Matter into that hole.

Just as well. We wouldn't want her parents to come home from their errand and discover the Dark Matter lying around.

"Hey…shouldn't we ask your dad to help out with this afterall?"

“No. My parents don’t want me to worry about this issue, so I’ve always pretended not to know. And I’ve decided to take this on alone, so I need to get this done right by myself…”

I let out a quiet sigh.

Tsumiki was an obstinate girl, so it was just like her to shoulder all responsibility for her own actions and decisions. It was an admirable trait, but it was not going to help us in this case.

Besides, I was just a taste tester to her, and it was hard to help her when all she’d done was shoot down every one of my suggestions.

However, she was extremely far from achieving her goal right now.

I could even say that the whole thing was impossible.

The future seemed pitch black for her.

“……”

“……”

For a few moments, Tsumiki and I both stared at the mystery hole that could swallow anything, lost in our thoughts. Gazing at the dark hole in the evening light, I imagined myself going over the edge, falling forever…

“……!”

I shook my head to clear it of the morbid thought.

Tsumiki shook her head as well, as if the same thought had crossed her mind.

Then, she turned around and gazed up at me.

“…Hey.”

“What?”

“Why did you say that you’ll help me with this?”

Tsumiki asked, still crouched on the ground with her body curled into a ball, making her look really young.

“Oh… Well… Because I can’t just leave you alone.”

I gave a vague answer, since telling Tsumiki that she was a “heroine” I had to

rescue due to my “Namidare Lineage” would probably sound too weird to her.

Tsumiki’s eyes widened, as if surprised by my answer. Then, she curled up even more, as if hiding her face from me.

“…Tsumiki?”

“S-Shut up! Stop saying such embarrassing things with a straight face!”

“……?”

Had I said something embarrassing?

Tsumiki’s ears were red, as if she was embarrassed herself… Or was it just my imagination?

I tried speaking to her again, only to have her shout at me to “shut up”… We were silent for a few moments, then, “You’re so weird… You faint after eating my food, but you still want to help me.”

Tsumiki whispered to herself, with her face still tucked into her knees.

“Sorry for being weird…wait!”

Wait a minute. I almost missed that.

“So you remember me afterall. Then why did you ask who I was when I went to look for you?!”

“Shut up… That was because the others came to yell at me after I let them try my cooking, so I pretended to have forgotten you.”

That’s right. There were other victims as well.

I understood that she didn’t want to be yelled at, but wasn’t there any other way to settle the matter? She was really such an obstinate girl.

“…Hey.”

“What?”

“Did you think we’ll win Food Champion?”

“……”

“I-I’m not chickening out here!! It’s just that I want an objective opinion. Or maybe an outsider’s perspective on this.”

I wanted to retort that they were essentially the same thing…but I restrained myself.

How should I answer her? If I were to speak the truth, I would have to tell her that victory was a hopeless cause, that we had almost no chance of winning. However, I sensed that Tsumiki didn't want to hear any white lies either.

What she wanted was a strategy to win this.

"……"

But I didn't have the answer she wanted.

"I can't cook, but I love the eatery. I love the customers from the business district who come to eat here… So I want to do something, even if it's a reckless gamble. I'd rather struggle up until the very end than give up."

Was she trying to motivate herself, with victory so out of reach…? Or was she really trying to reach out with her true feelings…?

Whatever it was, it had reminded me of something.

That even if this "story" was nothing special, with no magic or outer space or otherworldly happenings, no strong wizards or meteors or Demon Kings, it was still an irreplaceable "story" to Tsumiki.

"Come on, let's continue working on the new menu. I promise to help you as much as I can."

"…I still don't get why you're so eager to help."

Tsumiki asked again as she looked up at me with suspicious eyes.

This time, I had an answer.

"Because I want to rescue you."

"!! You've said it again…!"

"Hmm?"

Did I say something weird again? Tsumiki took a few deep breaths, as if trying to calm herself down.

A few moments later, she seemed to have calmed down as she turned to face

me fully and stabbed a finger at my face.

“Humph! Don’t forget that you’re just a taste tester. So you should just keep quiet, eat my cooking and tell me whether it tastes good or not.”

“Yes ma’am.”

Oh dear, there was her obstinacy again. But if she had thanked me, she would probably turn red with embarrassment, and I’d probably feel embarrassed too.

Back to her usual self, Tsumiki stood up and dusted herself off.

“We’ve wasted so much time here. Let’s go back inside and continue.”

“Alright.”

“Be more brisk with your replies!”

With that, Tsumiki jogged towards the eatery and disappeared via the service entrance.

“Wow~ Seems like you’ve passed the test, Rekka-san.”

“What test?”

“If only you knew.”

I had no idea what R was talking about, so I turned to head back into the eatery as well… But at that moment, “…Rekka!”

“…Satsuki?”

I hadn’t thought I’d see Satsuki until tomorrow, but here she was. And she wasn’t alone.

“Hey hey, who’s that girl…!?”

Satsuki was carrying a tiny girl on her back.

“I don’t know. I found her collapsed in the hills and tried to help her, but I don’t understand what she’s trying to say…”

“Shouldn’t we bring her to the hospital…?”

“That crossed my mind too, but… I was just hesitant, because she may not be human.”

“What…?”

I couldn’t imagine Satsuki cracking a joke at a time like this, so I peered over her shoulder to take a better look at the girl.

Her entire appearance was extremely monochromatic. The tips of her white hair were tinged with a slight green hue, and even under the failing light, I could tell how pale her skin was. She was dressed in a loose gown that was just a little muddy.

I knew she was sickly pale, but that didn’t mean she wasn’t human…

Just as that thought crossed my mind, the girl let out a weak sound and slowly opened her eyes.

“……!”

Her eyelids fluttered open to reveal…glowing eyes.

Just like how a cat’s eyes appeared bright under light…

This was definitely not ordinary.

“Please…help. The ‘Monster’ is…”

The girl fixed her eyes upon me and pleaded in a trembling voice.

In that moment, I realized that I’d just been dragged into yet another “story”.

Ore ga Heroine o Tasukesugite Sekai ga Little Mokushiroku!? - Volume 2 - Chapter 2.1

CHAPTER 2 – UNDERGROUND PEOPLE AND THE MAGICAL GIRL

PART 01

——

Quickly, we brought the girl up to the guest room on the second storey of “Nozomiya” to rest, while Satsuki whipped up a simple porridge for her. The girl, who had appeared so weak when Satsuki first brought her in, slowly started to gain strength as she ate and drank.

“…Fuuu, thank you for the meal.”

The girl, who was sitting upon the futon, bowed her head in gratitude, stone accessories clinking gently with every movement.

Seeing her out of the danger zone, the group of us gathered around let out sighs of relief.

“It’s alright, I’m just glad you’re ok,” Satsuki reassured her with a smile.

“Tetra apologizes. She accidentally dropped her rations and light on her journey to the surface… Anyway, it was a shorter trip up to the surface compared to going all the way back to the village, so up she came.”

“…? What do you mean, journey to the surface?”

Did she come from somewhere other than Earth?

“Exactly what it means. Tetra came up from the underground village.”

“……”

Did that mean she was some sort of mole person?

Seeing our confused expressions, the girl cast her eyes down.

“Tetra apologizes. It must be hard to believe what she is saying…”

She bowed her head in apology.

“Erm…”

Just as I was about to clarify the situation, I remembered that we didn’t even know her name.

“Tetra Metra Retra, but Tetra is just fine,” the girl, Tetra, replied as she turned her brown eyes to me. They looked perfectly normal now, so I guess they only glowed in the dark.

“So, Tetra, what did you mean when you asked us to save you just now? You were talking about a ‘monster’…can you tell us more?”

Only Satsuki, as well as R, were present with Tetra and I at that moment, so I felt that it was alright to ask, since I was sure she had some fanstastic story to tell.

However, Tetra looked doubtful as she glanced between Satsuki and I.

“Alright, Tetra is not afraid to tell…but there’s really a ‘monster’ in her story, so…”

“Oh… I guess we look like normal high school kids who won’t be able to help… Anyway, did Tetra come to the surface to seek help from someone specific?”

“No, because Tetra and her people won’t be able to handle the situation on their own anymore, so she’s come up here as a last resort…”

“I see. I’m guessing the ‘last resort’ is me.”

“…? What do you mean?”

“Well…”

…I explained the “Namidare Lineage” to Tetra.

“‘Namidare Lineage’…”

“Well, I’m sure it sounds preposterous, but I think the ‘Lineage’ is what brought you to meet me.”

“…Oh.”

It was obvious that Tetra was a “heroine”, what with her “story” involving something as fantastic as a “monster”. It was classic “Namidare Lineage” material.

“Since Tetra is not really looking for anyone specific to help, her meeting with Rekka-san of the ‘Namidare Lineage’ is probably destiny. If you don’t mind, please listen to Tetra’s story.”

With that, Tetra began her tale.

She was born in Ziz Village*, an underground community created for the express purpose of standing guard over the sealed “Monster of Haishin”. And right now, it seemed that the seal was in danger of breaking open.

“A guardian village underground…”

“Yes. Tetra’s ancestors were created billions of years ago, and have been standing guard over the ‘sealed space’ ever since.”

“Wow, that’s a really long time… Satsuki, when did humans first evolve on Earth?”

“About seven million years ago, I think.”

Hmm, did that mean that while both surface and underground people were humans, we had different origins? Their glowing eyes were definitely different, for one.

“But why is the seal suddenly breaking? If the ‘monster’ is a living thing, then its strength should have ebbed throughout all these years of being sealed away. Does that mean it is still as strong as ever?”

Tetra shook her head sadly at Satsuki’s query.

“Tetra isn’t really sure…but since the seal is billions of years old, it might have deteriorated somewhat over the years. Which means that if the ‘monster’ finds a way to regain its strength, it will be able to break the seal totally.”

“…And if the ‘monster’ is revived, both the underground village and Earth’s surface may be destroyed by it again?”

I groaned as I glared up at the ceiling.

So my newest enemy was a godly “monster”.

“Isn’t there some way to renew the seal on the ‘monster’?”

“…Tetra apologizes. Nobody knows how to do that anymore.”

Judging from Tetra’s story, it seemed like all the methods to strengthen the seal and keep the ‘monster’ trapped were lost to history, and that was the reason which had driven her up to the surface to seek help.

However, Satsuki and I had a way to deal with that.

“Excuse me.”

With that, Satsuki stood up and left the guest room.

She was a magician gifted with the Great Magic of Creation, which gave her the power to access the Akashic Records, a record of everything that had happened in our universe from its very beginning to the present time. With that ability, searching for the lost methods was child’s play.

Since the Magic’s existence was to be kept in absolute secrecy, Satsuki had to be alone while harnessing its power to recover the way to seal the “monster”.

“How is she planning to recover the lost information?”

Just as I was conjuring up an excuse to Tetra’s question, Satsuki returned, her face deathly pale.

“Satsuki?”

I called out to my childhood friend hesitantly, but she ignored me, her gaze fixed on Tetra.

“……?”

Tetra tilted her head to one side, a confused expression on her face.

“…Satsuki!”

“Oh!”

I called out louder, taking her by the shoulders and shaking gently. Satsuki finally seemed to break out of her trance.

“…It’s useless. Sealing the ‘monster’ requires a special tool that can’t be utilized right now,” Satsuki whispered to me before hurriedly taking her seat once again.

“…You can’t be serious.”

I could only clutch at my head in frustration at her answer.

I was so certain that this could be easily resolved with Satsuki’s knowledge, so this was indeed a great shock to me.

Did that mean that I’d need to face the “Monster of Haishin”, a creature capable of destroying the Earth, head-on in battle? Impossible! I’d most probably run away than engage the “monster” in a fight.

It was a stalemate.

“Arggh~~~ Dammit!”

If only I had some convenient weapon to help resolve this “story”, or meet with a new character who could be of some help.

“Chirp chirp chirp chirp.”

For some reason, R, who had floated up into the ceiling so that only her lower body still remained in the room, started to chirp like a bird.

Just as I was wishing that I could float as well, if only to drift up and give her a good knock on the head, I heard a sudden knock at the door.

Was it Tsumiki?

I stood and made my way towards the door leading out to the corridor.

“Come on in. Do you need me to taste test something again… Huh?”

I stopped short as I opened the door.

The one standing outside was not “Nozomiya”‘s poster girl.

Nor was it her parents, having returned from their errand in town.

Nor was it a human.

“Hello there. My name is Baa-kun, nice to meet you.”

It was a disgustingly-cute chibi elephant fairy(?) wielding a weird-looking stick.

“Excuse me~”

Flapping his large ears, Baa-kun drifted through the air and slid past me into the room.

“R-Rekka? What’s that?”

“What!?”

Both girls, eyes widened in shock at the sight of the disgustingly-cute fairy, immediately scooted all the way to the back of the room.

“Hello there. My name is Baa-kun, nice to meet you.”

Baa-kun chimed again as he alighted on top of the futon that Tetra was sitting on just a moment ago.

“Huh?”

Standing behind the creature, I spotted a huge chibi-fied bandaid stuck across its back.

It caught my interest, but the overall presence of the fairy was so overwhelming that I didn’t know how to respond. In the end, I settled with, “Who the heck are you!? What do you want from us!?”

“I’m here on a mission, of course. And haven’t I introduced myself already? I am Baa-kun.”

“Enough with the stupid answers! Of course we’re shocked, what with the sudden appearance of a weird creature! Shall I call the TV station to report your presence!?”

“That’ll be too much trouble. I’ve come with information that will be useful to you. Won’t you hear me out?”

“……”

Usually, I would have just grabbed Baa-kun and thrown him out the window, then wrapped myself up in the futon and convince myself that it was all a dream.

But now, I needed all the help I could get to resolve Tetra’s “story”.

I walked over and plopped myself down in front of Baa-kun.

“So, what do you want to say?”

“Hmm… Before I start, can I just confirm that you are Namidare Rekka?”

“Yes, that’s me.”

“I see. This is great. I only know you by name, so it would be trouble if I got hold of the wrong person.”

How did such a fantasy creature even come to know my name?

“Alright, let’s start from the very end.”

Baa-kun let out a disgustingly-cute smile that gave me goosebumps.

“Namidare Rekka, I need you to harness my power and become a magical girl to defeat the ‘Monster of Haishin’.”

“…….Huh?”

It wasn’t an exaggeration to say that the temperature in the room suddenly dropped to zero.

——

Note:
Tetra’s village is named after Ziz, a giant griffin-like bird in Jewish mythology, said to be large enough to be able to block out the sun with its wingspan. Behemoth, Leviathan and Ziz were traditionally a favorite decoration motif for rabbis living in Russia.

Ore ga Heroine o Tasukesugite Sekai ga Little Mokushiroku!? - Volume 2 - Chapter 2.2

CHAPTER 2 – UNDERGROUND PEOPLE AND THE MAGICAL GIRL

PART 02

——

“Huh? But I thought all magicians in Japan are magical girls?”

“That’s only in anime and manga!”

I guess Baa-kun was a fairy from a foreign country, since he had all these misconceptions about our culture… It was just like those people who thought that most Japanese were ninjas.

“Well, it doesn’t matter. Anyway, who are you, Baa-kun? Why can’t you tell us your real name?”

“Hmm~, but I’ve already put so much effort into shape-shifting into a mascot fitting for a magical girl, and selecting a cute name.”

Baa-kun let out a sigh as he put on a sad face, and the scene made me feel like puking.

“Alright, I’ll do it properly. I am Baa-kun, also known as Bahamut, ‘the perfect creature’.”

Was it ordinary to proclaim oneself as “perfect”? But where had I heard that name before, was it a video game…?

“B-Bahamut!?”

Just then, Satsuki, who was still backed against the wall furthest away from Baa-kun, let out a cry.

“Hm? Do you know the name, Satsuki?”

“I guess… Bahamut, Behemot, Behemoth. A legendary monster with many names, but widely known as ‘the perfect creature’, with a body so enormous that it can cover the entire land. Is that really you?”

“Yes. If you don’t believe me, why don’t you check the Akashic Records, daughter of Creation?”

“!?”

An expression of utter shock crossed both Satsuki’s and my faces.

“Oh, but I’d advise you to do a very restricted search, for example, ‘Godly creation Bahamut’s current location’. If not, you’ll be bombarded with billions of years of records, which may destroy your brain and render you a cripple.”

“What…!?”

A cripple!? I knew the Magic was really convenient, but I hadn’t known it could be so dangerous as well.

“Anyway! Hey, Baa-kun!”

I interrupted Baa-kun, who was happily chattering away, and whispered into his large elephant ears.

“…How did you know about the Great Magic of Creation?”

“As I’ve told you during my introduction, I’m perfect, which means that I can wield magic myself. Though it did take me quite a while to find you,” Baa-kun replied with pride.

“That’s awesome…but please don’t mention something as important as the Magic so lightly again,” I whispered with a peek over my shoulder.

“?”

Tetra looked lost, so I guess she didn’t understand our conversation about the Great Magic of Creation. It wasn’t that I didn’t trust her enough to tell her, but I just didn’t want too many people knowing that Satsuki was the successor to the Magic.

“I’m sorry. It’s not a magic I’m really interested in, so I wasn’t thinking about it when I spoke.”

“Seriously…”

I sighed as I glared at Baa-kun.

“Oh well, since it’s already out in the open. Satsuki, please do a check on what he’s said.”

“Alright.”

“Oh! But if it’s too dangerous…”

“It’s alright. As Baa-kun had said, I’ll be able to handle the information as long as I do a restricted search.”

“Oh, ok then…”

I made a mental note not to ask for any more casual favors which involved the Great Magic of Creation in the future.

Satsuki closed her eyes, and was silent for a moment.

“…Yes. It seems like he really is Bahamut, though it’s still hard to believe.”

“So, you’re really that powerful creature?”

“Haha! I know it’s hard to imagine when I’m in this current form. But don’t be overwhelmed by my greatness, you may still address me as Baa-kun.”

Baa-kun had mentioned this shape-shifting a couple of times, so I guess this disgustingly-cute elephant fairy wasn’t his true form.

“…So, why would a powerful creature like you need help from us?”

“Well, to be honest, I want to exact revenge upon the ‘Monster of Haishin’.”

“Revenge?”

The chibi had spoken another dangerous word.

“The true form of the ‘Monster of Haishin’ sealed away in Ziz Village is the Leviathan.”

“First Bahamut, now Leviathan…” Satsuki moaned quietly.

“Erm…”

I glanced at her, begging for enlightenment.

“Leviathan is a monster that’s often paired with Bahamut. Just like how the Bahamut is described as being ‘the perfect creature’, Leviathan is widely known as being ‘the most powerful creature’.”

Listening to Satsuki’s detailed explanation, I could more or less picture Leviathan in my mind.

…And “the most powerful creature”? What a straightforward description. The monster sounded like it could destroy Earth many times over.

Satsuki then did a search on Leviathan’s current location, and true to Baa-kun’s words, the creature was currently sealed away in Ziz Village.

“Both Leviathan and I were created as offerings for the Gods when the end of time comes…but,”

Baa-kun’s eyes narrowed, and I suddenly felt a trail of ice run up my spine.

An emotion so strong it made the ends of my hair stand was rolling off of Baa-kun, who had cast his eyes down.

“Leviathan may be ‘the most powerful creature’, but it is also violent and cruel. Back then, it went on a rampage, destroying the world on a whim. That was also when it stole everything that was precious to me.”

Revenge… I could finally understand why Baa-kun needed our help.

I wondered how long ago in time that incident which Baa-kun mentioned had happened. Probably billions of years ago… Had he really held on to these feelings of hatred all this time?

I couldn’t imagine the sheer length of that time, and trying to would probably just drive me crazy.

“Alright. In that case, let’s go defeat the ‘Monster of Haishin’ together.”

“…Thank you. I’m really grateful.”

“No, I should be thanking you.”

In fact, if my opponent was really “the most powerful creature”, then Baa-kun, who was created as Leviathan’s equal, would be the best ally I could ask for.

We shook hands, or rather, front limbs in Baa-kun’s case, and promised to

work together to defeat the “Monster of Haishin”.

Ore ga Heroine o Tasukesugite Sekai ga Little Mokushiroku!? - Volume 2 - Chapter 2.3

CHAPTER 2 – UNDERGROUND PEOPLE AND THE MAGICAL GIRL

PART 03

——

“Alright, let’s get started. Rekka, I’ll lend you some of my power.”

“Thanks, but what kind of power are you talking about?”

“Well, I call it power, but it’s more like magic. It will increase your original strength exponentially, and you’ll gain the ability to wield long-range offensive magic against Leviathan. Anyway, do you already know how to wield long-range offensive magic on your own?”

“…? No, I don’t.”

Why did he think that I would be able to do so?

“Then please close your eyes and hold still.”

“Ok.”

I closed my eyes as instructed.

“…..—.—……—”

Baa-kun started chanting, and a strange feeling suddenly invaded my body.

It was at once hot, warm, and exciting, as power welled up from the depths of my body, accompanied by a weird creeping feeling. Finally, it was over, and I opened my eyes.

“Is it over?”

“Pfft!!!!”

Satsuki snorted at my query. With one hand over her mouth and the other pressed against her stomach, she trembled, as if trying her best to hold in her laughter. I seldom witnessed my childhood friend doubled over in laughter like that.

Tetra had her face averted from mine, her shoulders trembling as she pressed a hand against her mouth, tears of laughter sprouting at the corners of her eyes.

“That’s truly a complete transformation,” R whispered expressionlessly.

“What? What’s going on?”

I looked down at my body…and nearly choked in surprise.

A colorful dress that was hopelessly girly.

A skirt so full of frills and lace that it made movement look impossible.

Boots with angel wings attached.

A sparkling magical stick clutched in my right hand.

An opal of hope upon my chest.

“W-WHAT IS THISSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSS!” I screamed, though I already knew the answer.

This was unmistakably the perfect magical girl get-up.

But there was only one problem.

I’m a guy.

“This is totally wrong!”

“What’s wrong? Is there anything not to your liking?”

“Nothing’s to my liking!”

I whipped around and shouted angrily at the disgustingly-cute elephant…then realized that I was just as disgustingly-cute as he was. Satsuki and Tetra continued laughing.

I demanded Baa-kun to explain the rationale of the costume.

“Well, when I transferred my magical power to you, I just assumed it meant that you’d become a magical girl, since you’re Japanese and all.”

But I’d already told him right from the start! And I thought he’d understood!

“Anyway, what can this magical power do?”

I put aside my embarrassment and asked the important question.

“As I’ve said before, you can now wield a bombastic, long-range, destructive magic. Go on, give it a try.”

“How?”

“Let’s open the windows.”

“Ok.”

I opened the windows.

“Point your stick to the outside.”

“Ok.”

I held the stick out straight.

“Now imagine an explosion.”

“Ok.”

Would a simple image do? Hmm, an explosion would look like…

“And everything in sight will be destroyed.”

“Wait, you want me to destroy the entire city!?”

That was close!!!!

“Why don’t you aim up at the sky instead?”

“Alright.”

I looked up into the night sky and located a convenient-looking cloud.

…I had no idea how powerful the attack would be, so maybe I should restrain myself a little… Would it work if I imagined a smaller blast?

Either way, I gave it a try.

Then…

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOMMMM!!

Whoa… It was an explosion a hundred times more powerful than a firework display.

“W-W-W-W-W-What was that explosion—!?” I heard Tsumiki scream from downstairs.

Sorry, that was me.

Yet Baa-kun looked unsatisfied.

“Eh? That’s strange… The blast is hundreds of times less powerful than what it should be like.”

“Just what kind of dangerous magic did you give to me!?” I shouted as I whacked the elephant’s head with my stick.

“Hmm. Namidare Rekka, did you restrain yourself?”

“No, I whacked you with all my might!”

“No, I meant with the magic.”

“Huh? Well, it’ll be bad if I bring harm to the city.”

In fact, I was glad I had restrained myself. If I’d fired an attack as powerful as what Baa-kun was suggesting, the shock waves would definitely have hit the city below.

“I see. So that means I’ve transferred the right amount of power to you,” Baa-kun said happily as he nodded.

Well, I guess I should be thankful, since I’d been given some powerful magic to aid me in battle against the “Monster of Haishin”…

“Anyway, can you do something about the skirt?”

“Hmm, it doesn’t matter to me, but I spent quite some time imbuing the costume with auto-defense mechanisms and counterweights, so if you want something else, you have to give me some time.”

“Argh! That’s not good…”

If we wasted too much time, Leviathan might just break through the seal.

Since Leviathan was a giant sea serpent, and Bahamut was enormous enough to envelope the entire land with his body, then I guess Leviathan would be just as huge, its body covering the entire sea floor. So even if I managed to defeat it, the scale of the battle would no doubt bring about a large amount of harm to Earth.

According to Tetra, the “sealed space” behind the door where the “Monster of Haishin” currently resided was made to be as large as the Earth. If possible, we’d have to make our way there as soon as possible and engage it in battle within that space.

“But there’s still the problem of Food Champion…”

“…? What’s that?”

“Oh, yea, I guess you hadn’t heard about that yet, Baa-kun.”

I quickly gave Baa-kun a summarized version of my “Namidare Lineage” and Tsumiki’s “story”, as well as the fact that we’d yet to find a way to win the Food Champion.

“Oh, I see. Well, I have a good solution to that,” Baa-kun boasted as he tapped his bloated tummy with his long snout.

“Remember I said that both Leviathan and myself were originally created to become sacrifices for the Gods? That means that our flesh is so tasty that it surpasses anything you humans can create… So once you’ve defeated Leviathan, you can use its meat to create a dish that will surely win the competition.”

“Oh…erm, really?”

The idea was slightly grotesque, but it sounded like a good plan to me.

It also meant that both stories involving Tetra’s village and “Nozomiya” could be resolved at the same time.

But that meant,

“…So I have to stay in this form until I defeat the monster?”

“That’s right.”

Arghh, I guess I could swallow my pride as a man if it meant I could resolve the two girls’ “stories”… I made a note to keep reminding myself of that.

“Alright, then let’s make our preparations for travel to the underground village of Ziz, and let’s go,” I said brightly, forcing down my embarrassment, but, “O-Of course… Pfft!”

“A-Alright, let’s do thi-… Pfft! P-Please, Rekka, don’t look at me with such a serious expression…”

Tetra and Satsuki doubled over in laughter again.

“This won’t do, Rekka-san. You’re now a biological weapon, capable of killing the enemy with laughter with just one look. Let’s move to someplace that’s darker so that you won’t die of embarrassment yourself,” R delivered the final blow.

The whole thing just made me want to cry.

Ore ga Heroine o Tasukesugite Sekai ga Little Mokushiroku!? - Volume 2 - Chapter 2.4

CHAPTER 2 – UNDERGROUND PEOPLE AND THE MAGICAL GIRL

PART 04

——

We decided to go back to our respective homes to prepare for the journey ahead, then meet up in an hour's time in the hills behind our school. Tetra had shared that the secret entrance to the underground world was hidden there.

As for the problematic magical girl get-up, it seemed that I could condense it into a mere bracelet. Once the magic was gone from my body, I was dressed once again in my school uniform. It was really convenient, and I wished Baa-kun had told me about that earlier instead of making the girls laugh so hard.

But the hardest thing about the entire night wasn't the costume, but convincing Nozomuno Tsumiki.

When I told her that I'd like to return home since it was getting late, Tsumiki remained silent, but when I added that I might not be able to come to "Nozomiya" for the next couple of days, she turned on me in rage.

"What!? You said that you'd help me out with this! Have you already given up after just one day!?"

"No, that's not it. Well…remember that girl Tetra whom we brought back? She happens to be a chef from another country… Erm, she's come to Japan in search of a magical ingredient that can only be found in the forests of Mt Fuji."

I thought it was a convincing story, but Tsumiki's expression darkened as she continued to glare at me.

"So she's agreed to let me to go on the search for that ingredient with her. If

we can get a hold of that magical ingredient, then we may have a chance to win Food Champion."

"Liar!"

"I'm serious!"

I had no choice but to defend my nonsensical tale.

"……!"

CRASH!

Tsumiki smashed her fist hard against one of the tables in the eatery…and glared at me with tears in her eyes.

"…Just speak the truth. You're giving up on this because you don't think we'll succeed, right!?"

"That's not it," I replied immediately.

In fact, I had no intention of abandoning Tsumiki.

However, she continued to glare at me with suspicion.

"You keep saying that…but what is the real reason why you're doing this?"

"Reason?"

"Yes! Tell me why you're so willing to help me! If you don't tell me, how can you expect me to trust you!?"

So, a reason why I wanted to rescue Tsumiki…?

Because she was a "heroine", and I'd been dragged into her "story"… That had been true at first…

But now, it was different.

"Tsumiki, you can be overbearing and forceful in taking everything into your own hands, but you're really just striving so hard, you know? You suck at cooking, but you put all your might into creating a new dish and end up making all sorts of weird mistakes."

"…Why are you suddenly complimenting me? I won't be tricked by that, you know."

“I’m not trying to trick you.”

Firstly, a restaurant’s business shouldn’t be a problem that a teenager had to solve. If it had been me, and I’d known that my family had fallen on hard times, would I have racked my brains to think of what I could do to help, and actually put it into action? I didn’t think so.

She might be a high school student, but Tsumiki was still a child, and it was ordinary for a child to rely upon their parents for support… Which meant that Tsumiki was not ordinary.

“I really think you’re so awesome, and I like that about you.”

“Whaa-!?”

“And because I admire people like you, I want to help you… Hey, are you alright?”

“Whaa-wa-wa!?”

Tsumiki let out a strange sound as she scuttled backward, knocking chairs out of her way.

“…? Tsumiki?”

“D-Don’t come any closer!”

She screamed threateningly as I tried to make my way towards her. Just what was happening?

Tsumiki then took a few deep breaths, but it didn’t seem to help her to calm down, as she turned her back upon me, hands pressing against her cheeks.

“H-H-How can you say such embarrassing things with a straight face!?”

“Huh?”

I admired hardworking people… Was that such a embarrassing statement? I felt that it was a perfectly ordinary thing to say.

“…Alright. I still don’t think you’re telling me the whole truth, but I’ll trust you this once,” Tsumiki declared in a slightly shrill voice, her back still turned on me.

“Ok. I’ll be back as soon as I can.”

“A-Anyway, you’re just a plain taste tester! It doesn’t matter whether you’re here or not! I-I-I’ll continue to practise cooking in the meantime, so you’d better…erm, hurry back as fast as possible.”

“Alright.”

I nodded, then left “Nozomiya”. All this while, Tsumiki never turned around to say goodbye.

~~~~~

Maybe I had pissed her off again? Puzzling over Tsumiki’s reaction, I finally reached home. Alright, time to start packing.

“I’m home!”

“Oh, Rekka-sama, welcome home. Would you like some dinner? Or would you like to take a bath first?”

Hearing my voice, Harissa pattered out to the entrance way in her slippers, her rabbit apron flapping.

grumble~~!

Just then, her stomach rumbled with a cute sound.

“Ah! Oh dear, how embarrassing!”

Harissa’s face turned scarlet as she placed both hands over her stomach, hiding the rabbit’s face from view as if it had been the one to growl out. The scene was just too cute.

“Didn’t I call to say that I’d be home late? You should have just started eating.”

“Oh, but…Rekka-sama hadn’t eaten, so…”

Her cheeks still dusted pink, Harissa stammered as she fiddled with the hem of her apron.

I was really happy that she cared so much, but also extremely sorry.

“Sorry, it’s just that something urgent came up. I need to leave again soon.”

“Ehh!!” Harissa exclaimed, more in pure shock than in dismay.

“I’m really sorry.”
~~~~~

Stepping out of my shoes at the entrance way, I went to a cupboard and pulled out a large rucksack from the back. Alright, I'd need some water and food… And since we'd have to walk quite a distance underground, I also threw in a few other essential items, such as an extra pair of shoes and a pocket flashlight.

I considered bringing the "Hero's Sword" along, but decided not to in the end. I still couldn't wield it properly, and either way, it was a sword made to cut through magic, not monsters. Besides, it might just get in the way of me using the magical girl's destructive magic, so I saw no reason to bring it along.

"Alright, time to go."

I hefted the rucksack and headed towards the door, only to find Harissa still standing in the same spot.

"Rekka-sama, you seem like you're in a hurry. Where are you headed to at this late hour?"

She must be concerned about me, since I was behaving so strangely and all.

Harissa's brows were furrowed as she gazed up at me with anxious eyes.

"Erm…"

I'm on my way to the underground village to defeat a "monster"… If I told her that, Harissa would surely want to come along.

Then I'd rather not tell her the truth.

I quickly slipped past Harissa, toed on my shoes and dashed out of the house.

"Aah! Rekka-sama!"

"There's no need to prepare meals for me until I come back! See you!"

"P-Please wait! Hyaa!"

Harissa tried to chase after me, but tripped along the way. The sight made my heart clench in pain, but since this was all to keep her safe, I fought back my tears and continued running.

However, since the rucksack was quite heavy, I soon ran out of breath.

pant, pant, pant…

I turned around, and since Harissa was nowhere in sight, I deemed it safe to walk from now on.

Ore ga Heroine o Tasukesugite Sekai ga Little Mokushiroku!? - Volume 2 - Chapter 2.5

CHAPTER 2 – UNDERGROUND PEOPLE AND THE MAGICAL GIRL

PART 05

——

While it was shocking to learn that there was a tunnel leading down to the underground world right in the hills behind the school, I was even more appalled at the deteriorated condition of the tunnel. As the steps were steep, with rocks of all sizes littered all over, we spent half the time tripping and stumbling along. While Baa-kun had offered to light our way with his magic, it was still very dark, and the sense of claustrophobia great.

Right now, the tunnel had widened somewhat, and the ceiling was high, so we were able to walk normally.

However, Tetra warned that the walls and ceiling at this point were really weak, and there was a possibility that stones might fall from above onto our heads. Thus, we had to remain on constant alert.

“Just how many hours have we walked…?” I asked no one in particular as I trudged along listlessly.

“About ten hours,” Satsuki replied, equally exhausted.

pant…pant…

Tetra, who was panting so softly that it sounded like an insect’s breath, was unable to come up with a reply. Since she was used to being underground, I guess it was the physical exhaustion that had tired her out.

“Come on, everyone, strive on,” Baa-kun cheered.

“Rekka-san. Only bishounen are allowed to show signs of weakness,” R teased.

Of course they would say so, they were floating through the air, after all. And R was especially irritating.

“Well…things will be much easier if I can just transform into the magical girl,” I sighed.

In the face of the tough trek ahead, my embarrassment was slowly withering away. Furthermore, if I transformed, I’d have enough energy to carry the two girls along, but…

“As I’ve said before, I won’t recommend it. The transformation is designed for a short battle, and turning into the magical girl will just sap your energy and magical power, so you’ll need to preserve it for later use,” Baa-kun countered.

Then why didn’t he design something that was more economical…?

Argh, this was getting unbearable.

“Tetra, it’s hard to imagine how you managed to make your way to the surface despite losing your rations and light. It was mostly an uphill trek, right?” I asked, not hiding the admiration in my voice.

pant, pant!

“Oh, sorry. It’s alright, you don’t need to reply.”

“*pant, pant…* It’s, ok. Tetra just, wanted to, save the village…so, *pant…pant…*”

Tetra replied breathlessly, limbs weak and eyes slightly unfocused. We’d been taking short breaks all this while, but she had been in this state for the past few hours.

Yet the one who was always hurrying us along was also none other than this tiny girl.

“The village must be really precious to you.”

“*pant*?”

“Nah, it’s nothing. Just talking to myself.”

Why did both Tsumiki and Tetra have to carry such heavy burdens on their tiny shoulders?

Seeing that, I was even more determined to help them in any way I could.

I wanted to rescue them in their “stories”.

…Just then,

Baa-kun’s magical fire suddenly extinguished with a poof.

“What?! Oi, what’s going on!?”

“Could it be!? Leviatha-…!”

Shrouded in darkness, all of us descended into panic mode. Then, ***rumble…***

When I heard that noise, I reacted instinctively.

“Watch out!”

“Huh?”

Using Satsuki’s shocked exclamation to pinpoint her location, I pounced towards her.

The grinding noise of tumbling rocks crashed just beside us, and a sudden weight toppled the both of us down onto the ground in moments.

“Ouch… Satsuki, are you ok?”

“Ah…yes. Rekka…you’re too close.”

As my eyes got used to the darkness, I saw that Satsuki and I were so close, our noses were almost touching.

“Oh! Sorry!”

I hurriedly jumped off of her.

“It’s ok…”

With a soft moan, Satsuki slowly sat up, keeping her eyes averted from mine. Arghh, this was awkward!

“Che! If you guys had gone just an inch closer.”

Shut up already, R! If we had really been an inch closer, what would it have

been like!?

“…Well. So what was that sound?” I quickly changed the topic.

Looking around, I saw that a large boulder had indeed fallen from the ceiling, and was now lodged into the spot where Satsuki had been standing just moments ago.

I was glad I’d acted quickly… I silently thanked my reflexes.

“Rekka-san! Satsuki-san! Is everything alright?”

“We’re ok. How about you two?”

Tetra, whose eyes had started to glow in the dark, and Baa-kun, quickly dashed towards us.

“Baa-kun, what happened to your light?”

“Sorry, sorry. A bug flew into my eye.”

“H-Huh? A bug? Hey hey, can’t you be more careful?”

patter…

“…! Who’s there!?”

My senses still on high alert after the incident, I reacted immediately upon hearing a strange sound coming from behind us.

“…*pant, pant, pant*…”

“…Huh?”

My body was tense, expecting an enemy, yet the voice which replied me was strangely cute…and familiar…and flustered.

After a moment, a fist-sized ball of fire appeared, chasing away the darkness from the tunnel.

And the one who followed was,

“H-Harissa?”

…It was the tiny form of the mage whom I’d left at home.

~~~~~
~~~~~

In fact, Harissa had cast an invisibility spell over herself, and had been following us all this while.

“S-S-Sorry! Rekka-sama was acting really weird, so I was worried, and…sorry.”

“…It’s ok. I should have explained things to you. Sorry.”

I hadn’t wanted to drag Harissa into a dangerous “story”, but I’d ended up doing just that. How stupid.

“Well, guess we have no choice. We can’t just let Harissa trek all the way back home from here alone. Not that we can’t trust her to do so, but it’s better if she comes along with us,” Satsuki suggested.

“…Alright, though I was hoping you’d go back with her, Satsuki.”

It was true. I didn’t want to place my childhood friend in such reckless danger. In fact, a dangerous incident had already happened to her just a few minutes before.

“But I was the one who led Tetra-san to you. Even if you disagree, I’ll still come along.”

gulp…sigh~

Knowing that nothing I could say would change her mind, I shrugged in defeat.

“Whatever. Harissa, it’s dangerous here, so keep close.”

“Y-Yes! Thank you, Rekka-sama! And thank you too, Satsuki-san!”

Oh dear… Seeing Harissa so excited somehow added to the burden already weighing heavy on my shoulders.

Either way, when the time came to tackle the “monster”, I’d make sure to do it alone. It was the safest option.

“How about we let Harissa light up the way from now on? Baa-kun is just too unreliable.”

“Haha, how mean.”

“It’s true. We’re counting on you, Harissa.”

“Yes! Leave it to me,” Harissa replied cheerfully as she used her staff to

generate a slightly larger fireball. With the extra light, we could clearly see the path ahead of us.

And so, our party of four, plus one creature, continued down the tunnel. A few hours later, we finally reached our destination.

Ore ga Heroine o Tasukesugite Sekai ga Little Mokushiroku!? - Volume 2 - Chapter 3.1

CHAPTER 3 – PRAYER AND BETRAYAL

PART 01

——

“So, shall we hurry to exterminate the ‘monster’?” Baa-kun asked brightly the moment we reached Ziz village.

“Can’t…” I replied.

“My calves are stinging…” Satsuki added.

“I don’t think I can stand without my staff…” Harissa complained.

“*pant…pant…*,” Tetra panted.

And thus, though we had reached the underground village, none of us were in the right condition to exterminate the “monster”.

“Hmm~. The seal may be weak, but I think it’ll be able to hold out for another day. Shall we rest for tonight and head out tomorrow?”

“How can you be sure of that, Baa-kun? We’ve barely even stepped foot into the village.”

Tetra had said that the “sealed space” was located at the back of the temple.

“It’s just a guess,” Baa-kun waved off my concern easily.

Well, it was true that I wished to rest as well, so I was grateful for this decision.

With lightened steps, we finally entered Ziz village.

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Ziz village was a tiny community located in an empty cavern underground.
~~~~~

Since it was basically located inside a cave, I had the impression that the entire village would fit snugly inside a large stadium.

Most of the buildings were constructed out of stone and mud, topped with round roofs, and were all short in stature.

“There doesn’t seem to be many people around,” I muttered as we walked through the village.

“Yes. Since the village is built inside a cave, we aren’t able to expand, so the population has remained small,” Tetra replied, her expression slightly glum.

“By the way, what is this light that’s shining throughout the village? It’s not fire, nor is it electrical in origin…?” Satsuki asked.

“There’s no real source of light. It’s one thing left to us by the gods, that the entire village will always be bathed in light.”

“Even when you go to bed?”

“…? Then we just need to close our eyes,” Tetra replied.

I guess you just had to get used to it.

Just then, a man, probably one of the villagers, headed towards us from the opposite direction.

As he passed us, we gave each other a customary nod before moving off.

But I noticed how the man spared us no more than a simple glance before hurrying away.

“…This feels different from that time when I went to Harissa’s world.”

Back then, everyone had stared at me unabashedly.

Due to the fact that we lived under the sun, our skin color was definitely different from the pasty tone of Tetra’s people, so it must be obvious that we were outsiders. Didn’t they feel the least bit of curiosity with regards to our presence in their village?

While I was pondering this, Tetra, who had been walking ahead of us, suddenly came to a stop.

“This is Ziz village’s temple.”

“Wow.”

I looked up at the large building, standing tall amidst the short structures we’d passed so far.

It slightly resembled a Grecian temple that I’d seen before in my history and art textbooks, an enormous construction dwarfing the surrounding homes. Its roof and pillars were decorated with carvings, and the material used to build it didn’t seem like something which could be found underground.

“This looks like it had been moved in from somewhere else.”

“Tetra thinks so too, but couldn’t find any information when she was doing research on this place. She thinks it’s probably because the temple houses one of the works of the Gods.”

“I see.”

It did sound interesting…but at this moment, I just wanted to rest.

Since Ziz village didn’t have any sort of inn, we had to spend the night in an empty room within the temple. As per Tetra’s directions, some villagers moved in some furniture before we were led inside, but…

“Erm, Tetra… Is there only one empty room?”

“Yes.”

“And there are only two beds inside?”

“Tetra apologizes. These are the only spare beds in the entire village.”

Well, since it was a tiny village, I guess it couldn’t be helped.

Of course, I didn’t wish to impose anymore on Tetra’s hospitality, but, “……”

“Whoa.”

The way Satsuki and Harissa were staring at those beds was just too scary.

“Alright, good night, everyone.”

With a bow, Tetra quietly left the room. Until the moment she shut the door, nobody in the room spoke a word.

But the silence didn’t last long. Satsuki’s expression turned serious as she

turned towards Harissa.

“Harissa-chan dislikes tight spaces, right? Why don’t I share with Rekka…”

“No! If we are going to split 2-to-1, then I’ll be with Rekka-sama…”

“It’s alright. Rekka and I have been sleeping together since we were children…”

“My family was poor too, so I’m used to sleeping in the same bed as my siblings…”

“No no no.”

“No no no.”

Their compromise dragged on, with both running down parallel lines.

I tried to intervene,

“Why don’t I sleep on the floor, and you two can each take a bed…”

“You need to exterminate the ‘monster’ tomorrow, right? How can you rest well if you sleep on a stone floor?”

“That’s right. Rekka-sama is just too nice… In fact, if you don’t mind, I’d like to share a bed with you when we go…”

Harissa’s voice trailed off into an unintelligible mumble.

And my suggestion was thus dismissed. Harissa’s face had turned a bright red, and I wondered what it was she wished to say.

“Erm… Why don’t I go take a walk while you two come to a decision?”

With that, I hurriedly left the room.

Ore ga Heroine o Tasukesugite Sekai ga Little Mokushiroku!? - Volume 2 - Chapter 3.2

CHAPTER 3 – PRAYER AND BETRAYAL

PART 02

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If I'd stayed any longer in that room, the girls would probably have forced me to decide on who I wanted to sleep with.

Either way, it'd be best if I went for a walk. Maybe I'd even find a good spot to sleep.

"I think you should be more honest with your feelings, Rekka-san," R sighed as she flapped her arms, swimming after me. "How about all three of you sleeping together?"

"Never."

"Please. At least try next time, or my mission will never be successful."

"Like I keep telling you, it's not as easy as…Hmm?"

Chatting with R, I'd unknowingly reached a large room in a corner of the temple.

Entering the room, I found Tetra within.

"Tetra."

"Oh, Rekka-san. What's wrong? Can't fall asleep?"

"No, it's just that a problem has arisen that needs to be settled."

"……?"

Tetra tilted her head to the side in confusion. She probably didn't get it. In

fact, neither did I.

I made my way towards the centre of the room.

“So, what is that?”

Standing next to Tetra, I pointed to the thing which she’d been gazing at when I entered the room.

Enshrined right in the middle of the room…was a statue of a goddess and a box.

The box was oblong, and resembled a casket without a lid. Decorated with ornaments and bolted to the floor, it seemed like it had been here since the beginning of this village. The statue of the goddess was holding a sword directly over it.

Since this was a temple, the presence of the statue felt normal…but the casket and sword made the monument slightly odd.

“This is another thing left to us by the gods. When we need to, we put food and clothes into this casket and pray, and the things within will multiply.”

“Really? That’s awesome.”

That definitely felt like a miracle worthy of the gods, together with the light that enveloped the underground village.

“Can I use it as well?”

“No. This was created by the gods for the use of the guardians, so it won’t work for anyone aside from Tetra and her people.”

That was just too bad. If only I could increase the amount of sweets and tea in my possession, maybe I wouldn’t be as exhausted as I’d felt these past few days.

Tetra continued to tell me more about the casket.

About how the people had competitions, seeing how fast they could coax the casket to multiply their things.

About how the casket had no limit, and as long as a person kept praying, the things inside would continue to multiply.

How Tetra’s ancestors had always guarded over the casket.

It seemed like she had gleaned all of these information from documents she'd read during her research.

"Once every seven days, all the villagers will gather in the temple and pray for the multiplication of essential items like food, water and clothes. It's easy when there are lots of people praying together, and we can distribute the goods fairly."

I guess it was different from the past, when anyone could just come and pray to gain goods for themselves.

Besides, it made waiting for a chance to pray to the goddess less of a hassle, and there was a lower possibility that they would run out of rations. As such, Tetra had come up with the rule that all villagers would meet regularly to pray for essential items and get their fair share.

"I guess it's hard, being a village chief's daughter," I commented.

It was supposed to be a compliment, but Tetra cast her eyes down.

"If only the villagers can be more lively… When Tetra set the rule for everyone to come together regularly to pray, she'd hoped that it would foster a sense of community among everyone. However, it didn't work as she'd hoped."

Tetra sighed as she traced the edge of the casket with a finger.

"Tetra and her people are able to live well, thanks to this casket. Yet at the same time, it had stolen everyone's will to strive hard, because everything we need, from food to clothes, are simply given to us with no effort."

"…Isn't there anyone in the village who can help you with this?"

Tetra shook her head.

"The village feels like it's been steeped in billions of years of fatigue. It is no more than a village of living corpses. Even with the recent disturbance, aside from Tetra and a few of the younger villagers, nobody even paid it any attention. All the adults…even Tetra's father, the village chief, saw no need for action."

Tetra explained as she let out a soft sigh.

I wondered if Tetra had given up on getting the help of the villagers. Unable to garner any support, always striving alone… She must be so tired.

Then, feeling exhausted and alone, she must have wondered if the village would ever come to life again. She might have even given up…yet…

Wishing to save her beloved home, she had traveled above ground to seek our help.

Just then, a sudden thought came to me.

Was “Tetra’s story” really about defeating the “Monster of Haishin”? Well, if the “monster” was revived, it would destroy the village, and that was definitely not what Tetra wanted, but…

What Tetra really wanted was to save Ziz village, right?

Of course, that was just my own deduction. Tetra had said no such thing herself…but could it be that she couldn’t? Assailed by feelings of exhaustion and thoughts of giving up, maybe she just couldn’t bring herself to speak of hope any more… Maybe she’d unknowingly sealed away her own wish to be rescued?

And wasn’t it my duty to help rescue her from that?

Not that I knew how to.

But.

“Tetra’s really been striving so hard.”

“Rekka-san…But Tetra is still-”

“So I’ll help you out.”

“Huh?”

Tetra looked up at me, surprised.

That’s right, Tetra was tiny, and had to tilt her head up when speaking to me. Her calm demeanor and actions might resemble an adult’s, but Tetra was still just an ordinary girl.

Even so, she was doing things for the village she was born in. Alone.

Just through our conversation, I could tell how much she’d been striving, yet I felt that she was just trying too hard.

So wasn’t it alright for her to rely on someone else…just for the slightest bit?

Someone like me.

“Well, we’ll surely have to exterminate the ‘monster’ first thing tomorrow. If Tetra’s ‘story’ is not resolved by that, then I won’t leave. I still don’t know how we can save Ziz village…but I’ll never abandon you, Tetra. Let’s try to work something out together, alright?”

I might be stupid and unable to render much help…but I still said it with a smile. Slowly, Tetra’s expression changed as well.

From surprise, into a quiet smile.

“…Thank you, Rekka-san.”

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CHAPTER 3 – PRAYER AND BETRAYAL

PART 03

——

I bid goodnight to Tetra and began to wander around the temple again.

Actually, I'd gone back to see how Satsuki and Harissa were doing, but I'd found a handwritten note stuck onto the door.

"Rekka, please decide who you want to sleep with."

Peeking inside, I saw that both of them had taken up one bed each…and I ran. That was a normal reaction, right?

"Rekka's so chicken that my stress level is as high as an ultra volcano."

R drifted from my right to my left, then back to the right again, spouting nonsensical lines that somehow still made sense, as I continued walking. Damn it. I was really getting tired.

"Argh! I think I'll just sleep here, in the corridor."

"Do whatever you like."

The girl floating in midair replied coldly to my grumbling… Was she really that pissed off that I hadn't chosen a girl to sleep beside? But the thought of sleeping beside a girl on such a narrow bed was just too unimaginable. I didn't think I'd be able to sleep a wink.

biriririririri-biriririririri

"Huh?"

Why was my mobile phone ringing so deep underground?

Mystified, I pulled my phone out from my pocket and glanced at the display… but instead of the usual caller's number, the screen showed a strange series of what appeared to be hieroglyphics.

"…Is it malfunctioning?"

"Maybe it's a prank call?"

"No no, even if it's a prank call, it shouldn't be displaying the number as hieroglyphs."

I decided to ignore it, but the phone continued to ring, with no sign of going on to voicemail… Left with no choice, I answered the call.

"…Hello?"

[Hello!? Rekka! Are you still alive!?]

Iris' shrill voice sounded out from the phone. Somehow, it felt like a long time since I'd last spoken to her.

"Iris? Where are you calling from? My phone is displaying some weird hieroglyphs."

[From Phenerita! I begged Papa to design a phone for me that can call anyone from anywhere in the universe, so I can speak to Rekka anytime I want!]

Alien technology was really amazing, but I doubted my phone would be able to store such a number, so Iris would be the only one able to connect the call.

[I've gathered all the latest healthcare technology in the universe here with me! I've even got an enor———mous injection needle used by the largest alien monsters! A monster so large it can swallow a planet will be healed just by a single injection from this needle! So don't die just yet, Rekka!]

But I'd probably get a fatal wound after getting jabbed by such a needle…

"Wait, I'm actually-"

[Alright, I'm heading back to Earth right now! Wait for me!]

Clack! tuu… tuu…

“She didn’t even try to listen to what I had to say…”

“Well, at least she knows that you’re alright, since you picked up her call. She was probably so worried for you. How loved you must feel…”

“Whatever…”

Turning away from the teasing R, I continued strolling along…until the idea to visit the “sealed space” at the back of the temple suddenly came to mind.

Not that I was ready to do anything, but I was just curious about the whole thing.

However, when I reached the “sealed space”, I found someone already there.

“Hello, Namidare Rekka.”

“Baa-kun.”

It was the disgustingly-cute chibi fairy.

He was floating right before the large door leading to the “sealed space”, ears flapping, an unsettling smile upon his face.

Was it normal for a magical girl’s mascot to show such an expression? Wait, not that I was a magical girl in the first place…

“What are you doing?”

“Hmm? Oh, nothing much. Just thinking about stuff.”

I could tell that he was lying, but maybe the thought of tomorrow’s impending battle of revenge he’d been anticipating for billions of years was really weighing heavily on his mind.

I walked up to stand beside him, gazing up at the door.

It was really enormous.

The “sealed space” seemed to stretch upwards forever, with no sign of stopping at the temple’s ceiling as it reared right up to the top of the cavern, giving the sense that most of the “space” was located out of the temple.

Compared to the rest of the temple, the carvings and decorations upon the door were boorish, and cracked in several places. Rumbling sounds issued forth

continuously from behind the door, as if the seal was slowly being destroyed.

Tomorrow, we would cross this door and enter the “sealed space”.

“By the way, I’ve been wondering about something.”

“What is it?”

“Why did you choose me to help you exterminate the ‘monster’?”

It was a simple question, but I just couldn’t come up with a satisfactory answer on my own.

At first, I wondered if it was because defeating the “Monster of Haishin” was a common goal for us, but that didn’t feel right. Aside from the “Namidare Lineage”, I was a perfectly normal person. Baa-kun could have literally chosen anyone else to take my place.

However, Baa-kun just laughed, as if mocking me for not being able to figure out the obvious.

“I’ve decided on you ever since you defeated the strongest and most infamous wizard, Messiah Candystraps.”

“Huh? Since I defeated Messiah?”

The sudden mention of the name of the wizard who gave me such a bitter experience was a shock.

“Wait a second. Since when did that even start spreading like a rumor? Neither Satsuki and I have told anyone about it, and Messiah doesn’t seem like the sort of man to go around telling everyone about his defeat.”

“That’s the wizard world for you. Messiah may be an especially prominent figure, but there are lots of other magicians who are great at magic too. As for the fact that Satsuki is the successor to the ‘Great Magic of Creation’, I’m the only one who knows that, so you needn’t worry.”

It seemed like Baa-kun had caught wind of the rumor of Messiah’s defeat and had done his own research into the battle, thus unearthing the knowledge about Satsuki and the “Great Magic of Creation”.

Besides, knowledge of the “Great Magic of Creation” had been well protected

with spells throughout the eras, so I guess only a creature as “perfect” and insanely powerful as Bahamut could know about it.

Which meant that there was still a low possibility that other wizards had learnt about the “Magic”.

That was a relief…but I needed to correct this huge misunderstanding Baa-kun seemed to have.

“You may not believe this, Baa-kun…but I’m really not a powerful wizard like Messiah.”

“No need to be so humble. Messiah is a powerful wizard that I’d rather not face off in a one-on-one battle myself, so an ordinary person would definitely not have been able to defeat him.”

“But I am ordinary.”

I then proceeded to share the story of how I managed to defeat Messiah with Baa-kun.

“…So you pretended that the meteor the aliens fired at you was actually your own magic’s doing?”

“Yes. I’m really just an ordinary guy with no magic or superpowers. Can’t you tell just by looking at me?”

It was true. Messiah had known that I could wield no magic the moment he laid eyes on me.

“Being able to sense magical ability and strength in others is a kind of auxiliary magic… Since my magic is mostly geared towards the offensive type, I can’t utilize that sort of auxiliary magic.”

“I see.”

That’s right. That was why he’d asked me if I could wield long-range offensive magic when we’d first met. I’d initially thought that he was just joking with me, but it seemed like he really didn’t possess magic of that sort.

“Alright… So you’re just an ordinary human.”

I shuddered at the tone of his voice, as an icy feeling trailed down my spine.

I turned to face Baa-kun… The elephant fairy was still showing me that disgustingly-cute smile, but it felt more sinister than ever before.

“What’s wrong, Rekka?”

“It’s nothing…”

Was it just me?

I wasn’t fully convinced, but I decided not to pursue the issue for now. Right at that moment, Suddenly, an earthquake shook, and the door to the “sealed space” started to shudder.

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CHAPTER 3 – PRAYER AND BETRAYAL

PART 04

——

It seemed that Leviathan had suddenly regained its strength, and was rampaging behind the door. At this rate, the seal could be destroyed any minute… Seeing everyone, who had gathered due to the commotion, present, Baa-kun spoke out.

“It’ll be bad for all of you if Leviathan escapes to your world, right? So the best strategy is for us to move in right now.”

“I see. Guess we don’t have a choice.”

I gulped at the sudden change in circumstances and steeled myself.

“…But Rekka hadn’t slept a wink. Will you be alright?” Satsuki asked with narrowed eyes.

“…I was waiting for you in bed,” Harissa huffed.

It was a weirdly tense situation. I hurriedly changed the topic.

“Well! Anyway, are you two really coming along?”

“Of course.”

“I’ll support Rekka-sama all the way.”

Yes, I’d expected just that answer from the two of them…but there was still one more person.

“Why are you here, Tetra?”

“Tetra was the one who dragged you into this in the first place, so she has the duty to see you through it till the very end.”

“Well, but-”

“She means to come along no matter what you say,” Harissa explained.

Tetra smiled.

“Yes. Tetra will not allow you to head into dangerous territory alone. You were the one who said that you would be with her all the way, after all.”

“…..!”

Unable to meet her intense gaze, I swallowed my protests.

Why were all the “heroines” this time round so stubborn?

“Rekka…I’d like to hear more about your story with her once we get back, alright?”

“……”

Satsuki and Harissa were both glaring at me angrily for some reason. What was going on!?

“By the way, how are we supposed to get to the other side of the seal, Baa-kun?”

As a last resort, I turned to Baa-kun in hopes of changing the topic. I hoped the spell to teleport us there would be so difficult that the girls would have to stay behind. They’d surely kick up a fuss, but it was infinitely better than putting them in harm’s way.

“Since we’re on the outside of the ‘sealed space’, we just have to cast a simple spell to open the door. The spell helps to keep normal humans out of the ‘space’.”

…Wait, did that mean that the door would be left open once we entered?

It was too dangerous, and I briefly wondered if I could get the girls to wait for us outside… Nahh, even if I could lock them up somewhere, they would probably use magic to escape and come after me anyway. I gave up.

“Alright. But I expect the three of you to stay out of harm’s way.”

“Alright.”

“Yes, Rekka-sama!”

“Tetra understands.”

I hoped they would keep their word…

“Are we done chatting? Let’s go.”

With that, Baa-kun started up a complicated chant.

~~~~~

As the door opened and we finally entered the “sealed space”, “……Huh?”

We found ourselves still standing inside the temple.

“Baa-kun, what’s going on?”

“The gods created a fake Earth inside this ‘sealed space’. I guess you can call it a man-made, or god-made parallel universe? But it’s not a perfect copy, so no life can grow here. Besides, the temple is now located aboveground.”

So we were in a fake world that resembled the real one?

As we exited the (fake) temple, the scenery which greeted us was not of Ziz village, but of an area on the surface, just as Baa-kun had said. In fact, the place looked awfully familiar.

“Isn’t this where our city is built? It looks different because there are no buildings.”

“Oh, you’re right!”

Hearing Satsuki’s reasoning, I finally recognized the area.

No life… Which meant that there were no humans, so there were no homes and shops and roads. I could almost recognize the landscape and rivers, but the surrounding forest made it hard to see too far. Light was pouring down from the sky, but it didn’t feel like real sunlight.

“Well, it’s a place that resembles our world, but it’s actually quite different in many aspects, the most important being that time passes extremely slowly here.”
~~~~~

“Ohh~. A world that’s like ours, but not… What a strange place.”

Come to mention it, I couldn’t hear a single sound.

Was a world without life this silent…? Now I finally understood the meaning of the phrase “silent as the grave”.

“I think I’ll go crazy if I had to spend three days in this place.”

“Me too.”

“Me three.”

“Tetra thinks so too.”

Yet this world, which all of us found uninhabitable, was where Leviathan had been trapped for eras.

“By the way, where’s Leviathan? This is strange. If it was rampaging right against the seal, we should have encountered it the moment we entered this world.”

“Maybe the opening of the door made it wary, and it’s now hiding somewhere, watching us… Rekka, you should transform now.”

“Urgh…alright.”

Heeding Baa-kun’s advice, I lifted up the arm with the bracelet… I totally didn’t want to do this.

But now was not the time to grumble, as I got ready to transform.

“Erm… Why did I have to do this chant again?…… Twirly twirly twirling jump! Transform me into a twirly destructive magical girl!”

Chanting the horrible spell Baa-kun had taught me, I drew a circle with the bracelet on my arm, then formed a V-sign with my fingers, with tongue out.

‘I want to die…’

I thought as light surrounded my body.

“Pfft!”

“…P-pfft!”

“R-Rekka-sama? What is-pfft!!”

Unable to control themselves, the three girls were defeated by my transformation.

I’ll say it again.

I just wanted to die.

Well, at least transforming into the magical girl gave me extreme physical strength, so I didn’t need to rely on Baa-kun as much.

The main bulk of the fighting would probably be left to Bahamut, the “perfect creature”. I mean, he was probably the only one strong enough to face Leviathan, the “most powerful creature”. I would most likely play a supporting role.

“Alright, it’s up to you now, Baa-kun…… Eh?”

Baa-kun was gone.

“Hey, wait! Where did Baa-kun go!?”

“Huh? I-I don’t know.”

The three girls were so amused by my transformation pose that no one had seen Baa-kun leave.

In a panic, we started calling out to Baa-kun, but were only answered with silence.

“R… Where’s Baa-kun?”

I whispered.

“I was watching Rekka-san’s lovely transformation too, so I don’t know.”

“Hey hey…”

Without Baa-kun in this “story”, the chances of winning against Leviathan were almost zero.

We split up and started searching for Baa-kun amidst the nearby rocks, but with no success.

“Rekka-san, what should we do?”

“……”

I had no answer to Tetra’s anxious question.

I had just cast my eyes to the ground in frustration…when suddenly, the sky darkened.

As a huge shadow loomed over us.

“Satsuki! Harrisa! Run!”

“!!”

“Huh? What? Wahh!”

Satsuki responded immediately to my warning, grabbing Harissa and leaping away. She had probably used some flotation magic, and the two of them cleared out of the way with a single bound.

“Ah! Rekka-sa-”

“Watch out!”

Grabbing a confused Tetra, I leapt out of the way as well. Still unable to fully control my strength, I ended up leaping a considerable distance in the opposite direction of where Satsuki went.

As I was still suspended in the air, “it” descended from the sky.

It was enormous… I could just imagine it easily smashing a skyscraper to bits. No, it was even larger than that. A humongous white serpent landed onto the ground, instantly creating a crater underneath itself.

“Leviathan!”

Rather than a serpent, I guess it was more accurate to call it a dragon, but it wasn’t like those dragons from fairytales. It had horns on its head, as well as wings and a huge fan-like tail. Its body was covered with wavy lines, and floating above its head was a weird contraption which resembled golden headphones. It was definitely a fantastic creature; a true “monster” created by the gods.

Shit! Were we really supposed to take on this creature alone?

Why wasn't Baa-kun here with us at this critical moment? With no answer, I had no choice but to face the situation head-on.

"Tetra, you stay here."

"Rekka-san!"

Hiding the weeping Tetra behind a distant rock, I ran back towards Leviathan.

"Hm? What?"

Just then, R let out a gasp as she tilted her head to the side, as if surprised by something.

"R, what's up?"

"I don't know. Maybe it's just me."

"What's wrong with you!"

Why did this future being choose to speak in riddles at such a time!?

"Satsuki! Harrisa!"

I yelled for the other two girls.

"Rekka!"

"Rekka-sama!"

I soon heard their replies, which meant that they were searching for me as well.

The two girls were caked in dirt, but didn't look to be injured in any way. It was a great relief.

"Rekka, what should we do?"

"I'd like to know too…but let's just wing it."

I was actually just acting tough, but there was nothing I could do but hold out now.

"If I lose, you two grab Tetra and head back to Earth via the temple!"

"Definitely not. I'll stay to support you."

"Me too!"

Why couldn’t these girls just listen to me for once!?

“Argh! Dammit! Then at least promise that you won’t go anywhere near the ‘monster’, alright!?” I demanded desperately, before dashing off towards Leviathan.

And this stupid skirt was just getting in my way!

Cursing the magical girl costume, I lifted up my stick.

Just then, the creature turned its enormous head and looked down at me.

“You bastards… You came in with ‘him’, didn’t you? Are you ‘his’ comrades?”

“Him”? Who was this “him”?

But I had no time to ponder that.

The power Baa-kun had given to me was destructive indeed, but how effective would it actually be against this humongous “monster”?

In desperation, I swung my stick out towards the creature.

Just then, I suddenly de-transformed.

Ore ga Heroine o Tasukesugite Sekai ga Little Mokushiroku!? - Volume 2 - Chapter 3.5

CHAPTER 3 – PRAYER AND BETRAYAL

PART 05

——

“Huh!? What!?”

The magical physical strength was gone as well, as I pitched forward and fell on my face. My chin hit the ground hard, and stars danced before my eyes for a moment.

“…Oh dear, I guess you really are an ordinary human being, Namidare Rekka.”

The disgustingly-cute elephant fairy Baa-kun, whom we had been searching for all this while to no avail, was once again floating before my eyes. My transformation bracelet was also back in his hands.

“Baa-kun, why…?”

“Yes. I was indeed suspicious at first that you were merely hiding your true powers from me, so I decided to put you in a dire situation where you’d be forced to use them… But you have disappointed me, Namidare Rekka. You’re just like any other normal human being.”

“?”

What was he saying?

“In short, Baa-kun-san had hidden himself away just now, to test if you are a human with any superpowers.”

R explained patiently, meeting my confused gaze.

But I still didn’t get it. If he really wanted to test my powers, we could still work

together in battle. There was really no need to put all of us in danger of being crushed flat by Leviathan.

Then, I recalled the icy feeling I'd felt back when Baa-kun and I were standing before the "sealed space", right after I'd told Baa-kun that I was just an ordinary human.

Had he been planning this all the way since then…?

"…Bahamut, I didn't expect you to turn up in person."

Just then, Leviathan's voice, filled with hatred, boomed down from far above our heads.

I tensed, but the "monster"s eyes were trained only on Baa-kun.

"I've been waiting for this day, when I will finally get my revenge."

"Is that right? Sorry to have kept you waiting."

In contrast to Leviathan's rage, Baa-kun's attitude was full of jest. I glanced up to see his mouth stretched wide in a grin.

"I was quite anxious when I saw that you almost managed to break through the seal, since that meant that you had regained most of your strength. But now that I've seen you, I guess it was a needless worry. I mean, there's less than one percent of your original power left within you right now, am I right?"

Less than one percent? Did Leviathan truly possess such a tremendous amount of power?

Ignoring my shock, Baa-kun smiled indulgently.

"Well, I'm quite curious to learn how you regained this strength, seeing that there's nothing for you to eat in this 'sealed space'… But you're still so weak that you can't even break through that little old seal, and you want to exact revenge upon me? That's just suicidal."

"…I promised that I would defeat you with my own hands, so as to redeem us from the mistakes you'd made. No matter how weak I may be, I'll surely defeat you," the white serpent declared.

"Hahaha! To think that I'd come here, all prepared for battle. How foolish of

me. So, shall I show you just how much our powers differ after these billions of years?”

Baa-kun teased, before turning to me once again.

“By the way, Namidare Rekka. I’ll take back this power which I lent to you. It’ll be child’s play defeating this creature single-handedly.”

With that, Baa-kun tossed the bracelet into his mouth and chewed it up.

Once he swallowed it, his entire form started to change.

His body started to grow till he was as tall as I was, then expanded till his girth was three times my size. His limbs extended as well, while five fingers with talons sprouted from his front legs. Finally, his nose, ears and tusks grew to match his new size.

He was no longer something as cute as a fairy…now, he resembled a fearsome demon.

Placing his hands on his stout tummy, Baa-kun scrunched up his snout and turned towards Leviathan, who was charging towards him.

SNORT!

Suddenly, an explosion shook the ground.

“GYYYYAAAAAOOOOOO!”

The huge serpent twisted as it screamed in agony.

SNORT! SNORT! SNORT!

With every blow ejecting from Baa-kun’s nose, explosions bloomed all over Leviathan’s body.

Blood gushed from its body like fountains, and the smell of burnt flesh stung my nose.

Leviathan, its body buffeted by numerous explosions and blood spewing, still continued its charge towards Baa-kun.

However, it was all in vain.

Then, Leviathan conjured up several water spouts around its body, which then

morphed into water snakes that struck out at Baa-kun.

It was still futile.

All its desperate attacks and miraculous water magic just bounced off the elephant demon's body, as Baa-kun remained standing firm and firing strikes at the serpent.

I stared at Baa-kun, the one whom I should never have trusted. Why was it that he appeared so sinister now?

"GUURGH…… GYAA…… URGH……!"

Finally, Leviathan used up all its power and collapsed, unable to hold itself up any longer.

Under my dumbfounded gaze, its giant serpentine body started to break up into pieces and disintegrate.

"Oh, it looks like it can no longer maintain this form."

"…What do you mean?"

"Leviathan and I take on different forms depending on the amount of power residing within our bodies. Thus, when depleted of strength, it becomes hard to maintain our giant form. I think there'll be nothing left of Leviathan now but a mere shell."

"What are you guys, balloons!?"

If their bodies were inflated by air (=energy), then it was natural that they would shrink in size once the air had been let out, leaving only the rubbery skin.

"Well, it does work that way. Let's go search for its shell now, and put a needle to it?"

Smiling, Baa-kun sauntered off.

After yelling out to the girls, I dashed off after him.

When we finally caught up with Baa-kun, the one we saw collapsed at his feet…was none other than what looked like a human female.

“Baa-kun! Who’s that!?”

“Hmm? Oh, this is Leviathan’s shell.”

“I…see…?”

I guess it must be true, since the only living creature within this “sealed space” was the “Monster of Haishin”. In that case, it meant that the woman must really be Leviathan.

But even though it might resemble a human now, it was still the “Monster of Haishin”, the “most powerful creature” that had almost destroyed Earth…

Then I should just stand by and watch Baa-kun eliminate her…

“Hmm…? So it’s really true…”

R, who was shaking her head and twirling around in midair, stared at Leviathan as she spouted her nonsense again.

Yet it somehow ignited a strong reaction within me.

“Oi, what is it? What’s really true?”

I hissed in a soft voice so that the girls wouldn’t hear.

“Well, she seems like a ‘heroine’ to me.”

“……Huh?”

“I said, that lady there is most probably a ‘heroine’. I thought it wasn’t possible at first, but I’m quite sure of that now.”

“…!? Baa-kun, wait a minute!”

Responding instinctively to R’s revelation, I shouted and dashed towards Baa-kun. Stumbling the last few feet, I leapt between the two of them and shielded Leviathan with my body.

“Oh dear… What are you doing?”

“Erm, well…”

I broke out in a cold sweat under Baa-kun’s narrowed glare.

“Rekka-san! What are you thinking?”

Tetra and the other girls appeared shocked as well. I guess I must seem crazy.

But I couldn't explain my own actions. Was it because Leviathan was now in human form? Or was it because she was a "heroine"? It must be a combination of both that made me unable to watch her be killed.

Moreover…I was slightly suspicious of Baa-kun's story.

And the way he treated me after discovering that I had no powers.

As well as the way he attacked Leviathan so viciously.

Furthermore, the conversation between Leviathan and Baa-kun seemed extremely strange.

Baa-kun had told us right from the start that he was "seeking revenge".

However, before the battle, the one who was talking about revenge was Leviathan instead.

It was as if their positions had been switched.

Just as I was about to confront Baa-kun,

"…Alright, this is it."

Suddenly, his attitude changed.

"Namidare Rekka, I have no more use of you. Now die."

With that, he eloquently pronounced my death sentence.

"What!?"

"Goodbye, useless being."

Baa-kun aimed his long snout towards me.

Shit…! I was going to explode!

My body locked up, unable to move a muscle as thoughts of myself exploding filled my mind.

"Rekka!"

Then, the flames of the explosion blinded my eyes as I faintly saw a translucent barrier shimmering into place before me. It was Satsuki's magic.

“Oh, you deflected my attack,” Baa-kun noted in mock admiration.

“Escape spells and protective magic are my specialties, after all!” Satsuki yelled furiously.

Baa-kun smiled, before aiming another attack at us, but before he could do so, Harissa had appeared beside me as well, pulling Tetra along.

“Jearim Neckrum!” She chanted.

Then,

“Hmm? Where did everyone go?”

Baa-kun looked around in puzzlement, as if we had disappeared into thin air… Yes, it was Harissa’s invisibility spell!

It was the first time I was involved in the spell, and I noted that I could still see the girls standing beside me, as well as Leviathan. I guess Harissa must have cast the spell over all of us.

Satsuki waved us over, then indicated that we should all hold on to her.

Harissa and Tetra grabbed on to one of Satsuki’s arms each, while I hefted the immobile Leviathan upon my back and rested my hands on Satsuki’s shoulders.

Then, all of us floated into the air.

But just as we were about to head towards the temple,

“Hmm~ Maybe I should seal the exit just in case.”

Satsuki grimaced as we heard Baa-kun whispering to himself.

In the end, we floated in the opposite direction, getting as far away from Baa-kun as we could.

Ore ga Heroine o Tasukesugite Sekai ga Little Mokushiroku!? - Volume 2 - Chapter 4.1

CHAPTER 4 – THE “MONSTER OF HAISHIN” AND THE “BEAST”

PART 01

——

Leaving the temple a good distance behind us, we floated all the way to the business district where “Nozomiya” was located in the real world before Satsuki landed us on the ground.

“I think we should be alright here.”

“I’ll leave the invisibility spell intact, just in case.”

“Alright. Thanks, Satsuki, Harissa.”

I really thought I was going to die when Baa-kun attacked me, which would probably have been the case if these two girls hadn’t been there to help.

Was I really that useless at the most critical moment…?

With the bracelet taken by Baa-kun, the supposedly simple solution to solve the two “stories” on hand was now gone.

“So we’re back to where we started…”

My shoulders felt heavy.

To think that I’d been wishing for a miracle character like Baa-kun to come to my aid, and to have such a simple resolution to the “stories” within reach, only to be betrayed.

And now, I had a new “heroine” to rescue.

I looked over to the redhaired woman, sitting some distance away from us.

Her entire body was covered with wounds and her formfitting combat attire was badly torn, but the ferocity of her gaze had not changed.

"……"

Now, she was huddled on the ground, half of her face hidden behind her raised knees as she glared at us. I guess it was normal, since we had seemed to be working together with Baa-kun till the very last moment.

If she was really a "heroine" I had to rescue, then I had to learn her "story", but before that…

"Satsuki, do you think we can heal her wounds?"

"No problem…but,"

Satsuki nodded as she glanced over at Leviathan, who was still glaring at us. She must probably be wondering if Leviathan would even let us help her.

I guess it was my job to convince Leviathan.

Here we go.

"Erm, let's start with some introductions first. I'm Namidare Rekka, and this is Satsuki, Harissa and Tetra. Shall we address you as Leviathan? We'd like to help heal your wounds, and hopefully hear your sto-"

"Then answer my questions first," Leviathan snapped, her gaze boring painfully into me.

"First, who are you? I thought you were Bahamut's underlings, but that does not seem to be the case. And aside from one of you, the rest do not seem like the guardians of the 'sealed space' as well."

"Well…"

Did Leviathan not know what humans were? I guess I had to explain.

"Satsuki, Harissa and I are living creatures known as humans."

"…? What are these humans?"

So she really had no idea.

"How should I explain this…? Well, I think it's simplest to say that we're one of

the most prolific creatures currently living on Earth?”

It was a lousy explanation, but it felt weird and proud to describe humans otherwise, like being the most intelligent creatures.

However, Leviathan’s eyes had widened at my simple description, as she suddenly wobbled to her feet and grabbed me by both shoulders, shaking me to and fro.

“You said prolific!? How many of you are there?”

“Ow ow ow ow! H-How many? Slightly more than six billion, I guess. And you’re really strong! Ouch! My shoulder’s gonna dislocate!”

“Six billion… So the Earth is not destroyed?”

“Erm, I don’t think so… Gyahh! I said it hurts!”

“Oh! S-Sorry.”

Leviathan let out a sigh of relief as she released my shoulders and stared off into space for a while.

“I see… So the Earth is safe… That is really great. I was just so worried that he had gone on another rampage…”

As Leviathan whispered to herself, large drops of tears started falling from her eyes.

While I still had no idea what her “story” was about… I was certain that her joy in knowing that the Earth was safe was genuine. But if she was the “Monster of Haishin” who had destroyed the Earth, then why was she crying now?

“…Well, let’s heal you up before we hear your story. Satsuki, I’m counting on you.”

“Yes.”

Leviathan, still crying, put up no resistance as Satsuki cast her healing magic.

With her wounds healed, I waited till she seemed calmer before resuming our conversation.

“Erm, Leviathan-san?”

“Call me Lea.”

“Huh?”

“You may call me Lea, human Namidare Rekka. There is no need to be so formal.”

Leviathan, or Lea, said as she wiped away her tears.

“Oh, ok.”

Still slightly amazed at Lea’s sudden change of heart, I quickly summarized our story for her, including details of the “Namidare Lineage” and Tsumiki and Tetra’s “stories”.

As well as why we were working together with Baa-kun, or Bahamut.

And finally, my suspicions towards the elephant demon.

When I finished, Lea was gritting her teeth in anger.

“He is still as devious a swindler as ever. To think he called me the “monster”…!”

Her shoulders shook in rage, before she took a deep breath and slowly let it out.

“Let me start from the very beginning. About him, and about me… And why I am the one trapped in this ‘sealed space’ instead of him…as well as my mistake.”

Lea closed her eyes and quietly began her tale.

“When the gods were creating life, ‘the perfect creature’ known as Bahamut was the most wonderful of their creations. He was made king of the beasts, and would serve as thus until the end of time, when he would be consumed by the gods… However, Bahamut was greedy. In his arrogance at being crowned king, he went on a rampage of the land, looting all the pleasures he could get his hands on.”

“But Bahamut was created by the gods, right? Why would they allow him to do such things…?”

“I do not know how humans think, but the gods are not perfect… Anyway, they attacked Bahamut with spears and lances, and sealed him up in this fake world.

After that, they named him as the ‘Monster of Haishin’, and created a race of guardians to watch over the ‘sealed space’.”

Tetra, who was listening intently to Lea’s story, spoke up now.

“…So the ‘Monster of Haishin’ described in the legends of Tetra’s village refers to Bahamut? Then why is Lea-san trapped here in his place?”

“Well, let me explain…”

Lea heaved a heavy sigh as she paused for a while.

I guess she was getting ready to talk of her “mistake”. Her expression was just like that of a guilty criminal.

“After Bahamut was sealed away, I was created as the next king of the beasts and offering to the gods. In order to ensure that I would not go on a rampage, the gods gave me the qualities of intelligence and control, as well as the ability to feel strong emotions. I was named the ‘most powerful creature’, but lived peacefully as they had planned…but,”

“…But?”

“In short…I was…too weak.”

Lea whispered in a tiny voice.

“Due to my immense power, I was unable to get close to others, nor were others able to get close to me. In the end, I was too weak to tolerate the loneliness… So I took on this form and headed quietly to Ziz village, to the ‘sealed space’…”

“But why?”

“…Because I wanted to meet Bahamut.”

Ore ga Heroine o Tasukesugite Sekai ga Little Mokushiroku!? - Volume 2 - Chapter 4.2

CHAPTER 4 – THE “MONSTER OF HAISHIN” AND THE “BEAST”

PART 02

——

Our eyes widened at the unexpected turn of events.

So Lea was the one who approached Bahamut in the first place…?

“I thought, no, hoped that since Bahamut matched me in power, he would not be afraid of me, and we could be together… I was just so weak then, and so stupid,” Lea berated herself.

“To him, I must seem like a foolish prey walking right into a trap. He latched on to my hopes and accepted me. As we talked through the door separating the world from the ‘sealed space’, I started to feel pity for him, to think that the gods were wrong to seal him away… And then, heeding his request, I removed the seal from the door.”

“Oh no…” Tetra whispered incredulously.

Since Lea possessed the same amount of power as Bahamut, she could probably open the door to the “sealed space” from the outside. Bahamut must have known about this, and made use of Lea.

“I am sure you can guess what happened next. After he escaped from the ‘sealed space’, he left me here and sealed the door shut again.”

“He must have felt threatened by you, Lea-san, since you’re as powerful as he is.”

Harissa deduced, and I fully agreed.

“…Yes, what she had said is all true,” Satsuki confirmed, after checking Lea’s story through the Great Magic of Creation. Though she was unable to access billions of years of records at once, having details of the story made it easy for her to check for facts and deduce if the tale was true.

In short, Bahamut had taken advantage of Lea, then sealed her away so that she wouldn’t be able to harm him.

So that was what had happened.

“Just listening to your story makes me so mad.”

But Lea just shook her head at my indignation.

“No…this was all my fault, because I was weak. I thought that Bahamut would be free once again to destroy the Earth as he wished… Fortunately, that has not happened yet, but I was the one who had let such a menace loose upon the world.”

“Erm, well…”

I was about to protest that what Bahamut did wasn’t her responsibility, but a sharp glare from Lea made me swallow my words.

“I have been regretting my actions all this while. Whenever I closed my eyes, I would dream endlessly of him rampaging the Earth above. Time passes really slowly here, so every second I spent in here felt wasted, as I wondered again and again how many lives had been lost, and if there was anyone still alive up there, or if the world was already destroyed.”

Lea looked up at the sky, bright with a faint light that wasn’t from the sun. The real world must be located on the other side of this sky.

“As long as he is free, there is a chance that he will destroy the Earth again, so I need to defeat him, even if it costs me my life.”

Lea finally stood up and started walking with determination towards the temple, where Bahamut was.

Seeing the painful resolution in her eyes, I hurriedly blocked her path.

“W-Wait! There’s no need to do this alone, right? I’ll help you, with ideas and plans if not with strength and power, so don’t act so hastily!”

“This is a battle I need to fight. I cannot get you involved.”

Lea made to leave again.

I knew that she wished to fight this battle alone, as an atonement for her mistake.

However, I still stopped her.

“But you haven’t got a chance of winning! Have you already forgotten how he defeated you just a while ago!?”

“I still need to do this.”

“…Dammit!”

She was just as stubborn as the others…!

Tsumiki, who wanted to revitalize “Nozomiya”.

Tetra, who wanted to rescue Ziz village.

Now Lea, who wanted to defeat Bahamut.

They were all stubborn, because they didn’t want their parents to worry, or have given up on relying on the villagers, or didn’t want others to get hurt. I knew all these had influenced their behavior and made them tough.

Yes, I know how you girls feel!

But!!

“I said, wait!”

I yelled as I grabbed Lea’s arm and forcefully held her back.

“What-”

“I’ve explained the significance of my ‘Lineage’, haven’t I? Lea, you’re my ‘heroine’. Without me, your ‘story’ won’t have a happy ending.”

“…But that means you will be dragged into my story? I do not want that.”

Lea returned my glare with one of her own, yet hers was filled with sorrow.

“The world that I thought would be destroyed due to my mistake is safe, and there are lots of these human creatures living there now… Do you even

understand how happy that makes me feel? Do you comprehend how precious humans are to me? I can tell you, but you will not understand, so I do not want you getting hurt.”

Every single word was laced with Lea’s feelings, piercing into my heart.

I knew that she really wished to protect humans, to protect us.

I could tell that just from her tone.

But,

“I know… but I don’t care.”

“What!?”

“Why must every single one of you want to do things alone!?”

The feelings which had been seething within me finally surged up and escaped in a shout.

“Haven’t you been listening? When I’m dragged into ‘stories’, I get the right to decide whether I want to help you. So the decision to rescue Lea… and Tsumiki, and Tetra, is mine to make!”

I declared as I took a step towards Lea.

“You want to do this alone because you’re kind, or maybe because you feel responsible, but when you can’t do it alone, there’s nothing wrong with accepting the help of others. Isn’t that the ordinary thing to do!?”

Another step forward.

I looked up into the face of the woman who stood taller than myself.

“So rely on me… That’s what I’m here for.”

“Uuh…”

Lea let out a whimper as her eyes widened, before she hurriedly glanced around, as if hoping to escape.

I grasped her hand.

“You’ve been blaming yourself here forever, in this empty place, haven’t you? So maybe you’re afraid to rely on someone else. But don’t be afraid.”

Billions of years had passed in the real world…and because time moved slower in this fake world, Lea must have spent an unimaginable amount of time here alone.

Her heart had probably been so worn down by hatred and self-reproach that there was only a tiny sliver of it left.

So I didn't want her to feel that way anymore.

To think of herself as insignificant.

To battle loneliness, and feel weak to have fallen for Bahamut's tricks.

And I wanted her to remember what it felt like to trust someone again.

It might have backfired on her once.

But she wouldn't be disappointed again.

I wouldn't let it happen.

"I'll never let go of your hand. If you trust me, Lea, then hold onto me tightly."

"……"

Lea was silent, her hand hanging limp in my grasp.

I refused to let go.

Then, finally, she gave my hand a hesitant squeeze.

I returned the grip firmly.

"…Will you really rescue me?"

Tears had started to fall from Lea's eyes again.

I hadn't wanted to make her cry, so I decided to play a fool, "Well, that seems to be what I'm good at," I replied with a bitter smile, "so leave it to me."

I gave her a confident nod.

Ore ga Heroine o Tasukesugite Sekai ga Little Mokushiroku!? - Volume 2 - Chapter 5.1

CHAPTER 5 – CONNECTING THE DIFFERENT THREADS

PART 01

——

This time, I wasn't going to hope for things to just fall into place. After Bahamut's betrayal, all the "stories" were now caught in a deadlock.

I needed to start all over again.

Well, not that I had any other choice.

First, I needed to find a loose end that linked up to the "story resolution"s.

"Lea, do you know if Bahamut has any weaknesses?"

"…No, sorry."

Lea shook her head sadly.

"He is 'the perfect creature'. As his names suggests, he does not have weaknesses."

"Argh…I see."

Hmm~ With that sudden realization, it seemed like a stalemate. Why did the gods think it a great idea to create something so 'perfect'?

"Well, why don't we think of how to get back to Earth first? If Bahamut closes the door, it'll be game over for all of us."

"Oh!"

Satsuki's suggestion came as a major shock.

"No, there is no need to worry," Lea hurriedly assured us.

“What do you mean?”

“When he first locked me in here, he did so to avoid a battle because we were still evenly matched. Now, the difference in our levels of power does not worry him anymore. He may be a swindler, but he is the type who would love to take advantage of such a situation.”

“…What a despicable fellow.”

“But we still need to come up with a strategy as soon as possible.”

We continued to share ideas, until,

“Erm…”

“Hm?”

Tetra timidly raised her hand.

“Tetra may know something about Bahamut’s weakness…”

“Huh? Really!?”

Before I knew it, I was leaning towards Tetra in enthusiasm.

“Yes. It was something she found while reading through the village’s legends… She thinks it should be true….because that legend was left to us by the gods.”

“…?”

Why did Tetra seem so hesitant to speak, as if the words were being forced out of her? If Bahamut really possessed a weakness, then it was the best news for us.

….But wait. Something wasn’t right.

Back at the “Nozomiya”, she’d said that the method to seal away the “monster” was lost to history.

Why would a girl who was seeking help lie about that?

There was another thing which puzzled me.

After listening to Tetra’s story, Satsuki had used the Great Magic of Creation to try to recover the lost legend.

However, Satsuki had said that sealing the “monster” required a special tool that was now lost.

If the special tool needed to seal Bahamut was really lost, then Tetra wouldn't be raising this point now. In short, the method to seal the "monster" away was still possible.

So why did Satsuki lie back then?

With these questions plaguing my mind, I waited for Tetra to continue.

Then,

"Bahamut's weakness…is the guardian's blood. Tetra's blood."

It was the worst answer.

"What……!?"

"……"

Satsuki averted her eyes in silence at my shocked reaction.

"A guardian's blood will burn and cause his body to become inflamed, and should it enter his body, it will poison him to death. Tetra and her people were created by the gods for the sole purpose of killing Bahamut," Tetra continued.

"In the case that Bahamut should break the seal, he would be extremely hungry since there is no food present in this fake world. Therefore, the villagers living right next to the 'sealed space' will be his first target… In short, Tetra and her people are a trap created by the gods to kill the 'Monster of Haishin'."

"So…the gods created Tetra and the villagers to be eaten by Bahamut!?"

"That's right. Rekka, do you recall the goddess wielding the sword in our temple?"

"Erm, yeah…"

"That sword was placed there in the event that our blood is not enough to poison him. We are supposed to stab ourselves with the sword and pour our blood into the casket, and pray so that its volume multiplies to what is required…"

"Whaaaaaat!???"

My brain was instantly flooded with boiling rage, as my hands balled themselves into fists.

Creating life so that it can be destroyed. That was totally not normal!! To be honest, it was just plain suicide!! You must be joking!!

Lea had said that the gods weren't perfect, and now I understood why. Such bastards could never be perfect.

I also understood why Satsuki had lied, because she couldn't bring herself to suggest the method… Similarly, it couldn't be helped that Tetra had lied as well. For someone who wanted to rescue the village, a method that called for the sacrifice of the villagers was definitely out of the question.

Yet she was sharing it with us now, because, "So if Tetra lures Bahamut to eat her…"

I knew it.

"Idiot, nobody's gonna let you do that."

"But there is no other way."

"We'll find one if we think hard."

"But if the 'monster' continues to block the door, then all of you won't be able to leave. So-"

"Shut up."

I would never resort to such a cruel method, even if it costs me my life. I mean…

"You talk of suicide so easily, but how can I sacrifice someone who's so frightened that her knees are trembling?"

"……!"

"Tetra, stop thinking that you have to do this yourself. Don't try to shoulder the burden on your own. Rely on me, on all of us. If you want to save Ziz village, then talk to the villagers. Don't stop trusting others. So let's all come together now and think of a way to defeat Bahamut."

After convincing Lea, I found it easier to speak of my feelings now. Both these situations were desperate, but it just strengthened my spirit.

Yes, there was no need to give up.

We would all think of a way to defeat the “perfect” bastard.

Ore ga Heroine o Tasukesugite Sekai ga Little Mokushiroku!? - Volume 2 - Chapter 5.2

CHAPTER 5 – CONNECTING THE DIFFERENT THREADS

PART 02

——

“…That’s right,” Satsuki suddenly exclaimed as she lifted her head. “Lea-san, you said that the gods used spears when they were sealing Bahamut away?”

“Yes.”

“Do you know where he was hit?”

“I am sure…it was on the back.”

“I see. Give me a minute…”

“Oh!”

As Satsuki closed her eyes and focused on her magic, I finally realized what she was getting at.

Thus far, we had only considered how the gods had sealed away the “Monster of Haishin” from one perspective. So rather than focus on how the gods sealed him away, we should be looking at how they defeated the “perfect creature” in the first place.

That was the only way we could find out his weakness.

“…Yes. Bahamut has a wound on his back from where he took a hit from a god’s spear billions of year ago. In fact, the wound is still bleeding right now.”

That’s right. When Bahamut was still in his fairy form, there was a large bandaid stuck on his back. Was it there to hide that raw wound?

“But…how are we going to use that wound to defeat Mr. Elephant?”

Mr. Elephant…? Harissa’s way of addressing Bahamut was just too cute.

But she had a valid concern. A wound was a wound, but if we could not use it to our advantage, it would still be useless.

Amongst us, Lea was the only one who could match him in strength. However, she was weak after starving for so long in this fake world… Wait.

“By the way, Lea, how did you regain that strength to try to break against the seal?”

The seal’s condition had been deteriorating for years, but without food, Lea would rapidly lose strength in this fake world as well. Both seal and beast should have weakened…but she had managed to gain some strength to try to force her way out.

Maybe that was where our “opportunity” lay.

“How I regained my strength…well, it will be easier if I showed you in person.”

With that, Lea started walking as we followed. Of course, we kept Harissa’s invisibility spell on, just in case.

And the thing that Lea showed to me was…a black hole in the ground.

“T-This is…”

“Before I lost all my strength, I did my best to break through the seal, but this was the only thing I managed to accomplish… I would have escaped through here, but as you can see, it is much too small for me.”

Lea sighed, her prominent chest heaving as if proving her point.

“……”

The other three girls wordlessly glanced down at their own bodies, and I wisely chose not to comment. Harissa’s eyes were slowly brimming with tears. Hey, don’t worry, you’re only thirteen, you’d grow some day. Stop, the size of their chests had nothing to do with the hole, it was too tiny anyway… Wait, why was I even thinking about their chests?

“All I can say is that there will still be a demand for girls with small breasts in

the future.”

That’s enough! Anyway, why was R always so keen to talk about breasts? Did she like them so much!?

No no, that’s not the issue! Let’s get back on topic.

Chest sizes aside, the hole Lea had created…somehow looked exactly like the one in “Nozomiya”‘s backyard, where Tsumiki dumped all her failed creations.

It did have the same black aura, so I was pretty sure it was the same hole.

So what was the link between the hole and Lea regaining her strength?

“Sometimes, things from Earth appear from this hole, as if someone was dropping them here. Usually, it is only dirt…but recently, delicious high-energy foods have been coming through.”

Huh? Delicious high-energy foods? Could it be?

Just then, a black object suddenly shot up from the hole, then landed with a plop on the ground.

Everyone’s gazes immediately fixed onto the black round thing…

“Urgh!”

Satsuki and I groaned in unison as we recognized it for what it was.

That ominous pressurizing aura… There was no mistake, it was one of Tsumiki’s failed creations… or as I like to call it, Dark Matter.

“This is it, the delicious high-energy food.”

“O-Oh…”

Well, I had guessed that this was the same hole as the one at “Nozomiya”, but seeing it proven was still a shock.

“Can it be? Can this be the cooking of that girl you call Tsumiki whom you talked about just now?”

Lea asked, slightly shocked herself as she made the connection.

“…Y-Yeah. Erm, this may be shocking, but Nozomuno-san’s cooking may be just the thing we need.”

“Huh? But Satsuki… Appearances aside, shouldn’t this be just normal food?”

“Cooking is very similar to the process of creating magical potions, since both requires the mixing of objects with specific properties. In fact, Nozomuno-san’s creations are actually extremely potent cursed poisons…”

That’s right. I remembered how Satsuki had described the Dark Matter as something “potent enough to kill hundreds of sacrifice victims”.

I see. While I was still doubtful about the whole thing, being a layman to magic, it all somehow made sense.

What had brought us into this fake world in a panic was the fact that the seal had been in danger of being destroyed by Lea. Before I left, Tsumiki had said that she would continue to practise her cooking… She had probably created more Dark Matter and dumped it into the mystery hole, which Lea had then consumed.

What a strange coincidence, indeed.

That the Dark Matter had been at the start of all the three girls’ “stories”.

If only we had a large quantity of it, would it be enough for Lea to regain the strength needed to defeat Bahamut? But how…

“Lea, have you really been eating this?”

I asked, not sure if I should feel admiration or disgust.

“I have always had strange taste. And to find such high-energy food in this fake world, I just…!”

Lea stopped mid-sentence as she suddenly turned towards the temple in a panic.

I followed her gaze.

There, a half-man, half-beast shadow lurked…

“…There you are.”

“Duck!”

Bahamut and Lea’s voices sounded out together as chaos erupted.

Ore ga Heroine o Tasukesugite Sekai ga Little Mokushiroku!? - Volume 2 - Chapter 5.3

CHAPTER 5 – CONNECTING THE DIFFERENT THREADS

PART 03

——

Bahamut had his snout pointed at us as a pillar of fire suddenly rained down from the sky. Lea grabbed the Dark Matter, swallowed it down and immediately summoned a water spout.

The fire and water met head-on, creating a heavy blanket of steam.

“GUUUUURRRRGH!”

“Haha, so that is your source of energy? Looks quite delicious. Why don’t you share a bite with me too?”

Bahamut’s teasing voice sounded out from behind the curtain of steam.

Had the high-energy Dark Matter somehow lured Bahamut over?

No, the fiery magical attack had been directly towards us. But he shouldn’t be able to spot us under the invisibility spell…

“S-Sorry Rekka-sama! Their magical power is too overwhelming, so my spell was broken~!”

“Really!? Quick, cast another one-”

“I can’t until the magical field has settled down again, because this spell is quite delicate~”

Harissa explained tearfully.

This was bad. Even if Lea could continue to ward off Bahamut’s attacks, it

would be almost impossible for us to escape.

Wait, Lea!

“Urgh! Damn you!”

In contrast to the relaxed Bahamut, Lea was gritting her teeth in effort. Though she had just regained some energy, it didn’t seem like it was enough to stand off against Bahamut.

We would need a lot more Dark Matter to restore her original strength as the “most powerful creature”.

“Now, time for a stronger attack.”

As soon as I heard these words, a pillar of fire much larger than the previous one pierced through the steam, bashing through Lea’s magic.

“UUUUUUUUUUUUUUWWWWARRRGH!!”

For a moment, Lea’s water spout held against the attack…but was slowly overpowered.

But that moment was enough for Lea.

“AARRRGH!!”

Just before the pillar of fire descended upon us, Lea twisted her water spout, deflecting the fire’s direction away.

Thanks to her, we managed to escape being burned alive, but…

“Fufu, how careless.”

“!?”

…All her energy depleted, Lea was unable to react as Bahamut charged up and sent her flying with a kick from his thick leg.

“Gyaaah!?”

Lea fell to the ground rolling, before colliding against a large rock.

“Urgh!”

Bahamut then shifted his gaze…to me.

Shit! The invisibility spell was gone.

“Rekka!”

“Rekka-sama!”

Satsuki and Harissa made to rush over, but, “What a nuisance.”

The two girls suddenly flew backwards through the air, as if they had been hit by a large invisible object.

“No, Bahamut!”

“Oh dear, didn’t I tell you it’s alright to call me Baa-kun?”

“Don’t take me for a fool!”

Just how far was he going to play with us like that?

Bahamut clicked his talons together as the corner of his lips lifted in a smile.

“Namidare Rekka, I wonder what those girls would do if you died here?” He wondered out loud, as if enjoying himself.

“…Then answer my questions before you kill me.”

“Hmm?”

“Was the story you told us entirely made of lies?”

“Of course.”

“Did you really ravage the Earth?”

“That was so much fun.”

“…What about that magical girl costume?”

“That was just to have some fun at your expense.”

My annoyance rose at Bahamut’s chortling…but there was still more.

“When we were descending underground…it wasn’t a coincidence that your magical light went out and that rock almost landed on Satsuki?”

“That’s because she is a wielder of the Great Magic of Creation. I managed to manipulate her in the beginning so she wouldn’t discover my true past, but it would be trouble if she dug out the information later on.”

“Then why didn’t you target me before Satsuki came along?”

“Well, that was what I’d planned, Namidare Rekka. Unfortunately, you managed to find Tetra and hear her story before I could reach you. If not, you would be completely under my control now.”

Yes, he had suddenly appeared and offered a helping hand, and I had jumped right in.

The story just seemed more ridiculous the more I thought about it, and I berated myself for not realizing it sooner. I had been so desperate for help that I had trusted him without thought.

To think that my idiocy had put Satsuki in danger…!

“I’ll never forgive you!”

“It doesn’t matter to me. Alright, ready to die?”

“Huh!?”

My rage clouded my brain, as I saw Bahamut charge towards me, talons raised.

It was too late to escape…!

I guess subjucating a “monster” was really a hero or god’s job, not meant for an ordinary human like me…

Yes.

I was just too ordinary.

In the face of death, my limbs were frozen as my field of vision narrowed, making me unable to react in the slightest manner.

And because of that,

“Rekka-san!”

…I could only watch as Tetra pounced and pushed me out of the way, putting herself right in the line of Bahamut’s attack.

The “monster”‘s talons pierced through Tetra’s shoulder.

“Ah! Aaaah…!”

“Tetra!”

Tetra’s pained cries pulled me back to reality.

“Oh dear, now look at what you’ve done. I’d only meant to slash you.”

Bahamut laughed as he pulled his talons out from Tetra’s flesh.

Blood immediately gushed from the wound as Tetra swayed and collapsed backwards.

“Tetra? Oi, hang on!”

Catching her, I continued to shout her name.

“……”

There was no reply.

Her pale skin was slowly turning white as her eyes remained shut.

No…! No…! This couldn’t be happening!!

The elephant demon, body stained scarlet with Tetra’s blood, laughed scornfully at my panic.

“What’s wrong? Go on, run away, or her sacrifice would go to was…te… W-Wh-Wh-Wha…! What’s this!?”

Bahamut’s disdainful voice suddenly morphed into cries of pain.

“Gyaahh! Guuueeeeehh! What is this!? My body, too hot…! I’m melting…!?”

Bahamut’s body was smoking and melting, as if it had been splashed with sulfuric acid…

“…That’s right!”

The guardian’s blood was Bahamut’s weakness.

Tetra had said that her blood could burn and inflame his body.

Was that the reason why she jumped in the way!?

“Tetra! You idiot! Why did you do that!?”

“Ahh… R-Rekka-san?”

Tetra slowly opened her eyes, as if hearing my angry cries. So she was still

alive…but her body was getting colder by the minute! The wound hadn't hit her heart, but it was small comfort to the amount of blood gushing from the wound.

"Tetra is so glad…Rekka-san is alright."

She whispered in a tiny voice.

How could she?

How could she say that with a smile?

As if nothing else mattered to her.

"Idiot! Why would you save someone like me…!?"

"Please don't…say that. Tetra is…so happy, that Rekka-san wants to save her village with her."

Tetra's breathing turned shallow. I'd kept one hand pressed tight against her wound, but the blood continued to flow through my fingers. It was truly a hopeless situation.

Ignoring Bahamut, who was jumping around frantically wiping the blood from his body, I lifted Tetra in my arms and dashed towards the fallen Satsuki.

"Satsuki! Satsuki, get up!"

"Mmn… Rekka…!? Tetra-san! What happened!?"

"Just hurry and heal her! Harissa! Can you wake Harissa too!?"

"Uuh! Aah…y-yes! My head is still spinning."

"Sorry to force this upon you, but Tetra's in danger! Get Harissa and work together to heal her!"

"N-No problem!"

"Thanks!"

Without any knowledge of first-aid, there was nothing I could do to help. Tetra's life was now in their hands…